Qurʾans of the Umayyads

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Qur'ans of the Umayyads

A First Overview

By

François Déroche



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Abbreviations

BL	British Library
BnF	Bibliothèque nationale de France
CBL	The Chester Beatty Library
CRAI	*Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*
DaM	Dār al-Makhṭūṭāt
EI	*Encyclopaedia of Islam*
IOS	Institute of Oriental Studies
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JRAS	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*
NLR	National Library of Russia
ŞE	Şam Evrakı
TIEM	Türk ve Islam Eserleri Müzesi
TKS	Topkapı Sarayı Library
UB	Universitätsbibliothek
WZKM	*Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*

Preface

The present book is the result of the invitation extended to me by Prof. Léon Buskens to give a series of four conferences at LUCIS (Leiden University Centre for the Study of Islam and Society) while I was Visiting Scaliger Professor in Leiden in April 2010. I want to thank him for this wonderful opportunity to make a first assessment of our knowledge about the history of the *muṣḥaf* in Umayyad times. I also express my gratitude to Prof. Jan Just Witkam who was at the origin of my very pleasant and fruitful stay in Leiden. I extend my thanks to all those who allowed me over the years to study the manuscripts kept in the collections over which they presided: Muhammad al-Khumari (Sanaa), Nazan Ölçer (Istanbul), Murad Rammah (Kairouan), Olga Vasilyeva (Saint Petersburg) and Elaine Wright (Dublin) as well as my colleagues in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Marie-Geneviève-Guesdon and Annie Vernay-Nouri. The final version of the text was revised by Hannah Mason, thanks to the support of LUCIS and Brill: I am very grateful for her help.

Much of the information on which this book is based was collected in Istanbul where I could spend a few years studying the collection kept in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum, first as a member of the French research institute (IFEA), then with a scholarship of the Max van Berchem Foundation in Geneva: I am deeply indebted to both institutions for their support. The publication of most of the illustrations was made possible thanks to the French-German project *Coranica*. The following essay, which retains its original division into four talks, focuses on a selection of material which seemed especially relevant to a presentation of the main trends I suggest to identify during the Umayyad period. The variable state of the evidence, from almost complete manuscripts to isolated fragments, from copies which have been thoroughly investigated to others which are either unpublished or only known through a photograph, makes the comparative approach difficult. I hope that, in spite of its many shortcomings, this book will contribute to our understanding of Islamic culture in Umayyad times and to the inclusion of this still little-known material in our representations of this period.

Introduction

The early copies of the Qur'an emerged as a possible object for scientific investigation towards the middle of the nineteenth century. By the end of the eighteenth century, a Danish scholar, Johann Christian Georg Adler had already examined a few Qur'anic manuscripts kept in the Royal Library in Copenhagen but concluded that there was little to be gained from their study.[1] Things had apparently changed substantially when the French Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres organised in 1858 a scholarly competition with the following subject matter: "faire l'histoire critique du texte du Coran".[2] The advice offered to the prospective candidates hinted at the early copies as a possible source of evidence. The acquisition in 1833 by the then Royal Library in Paris of the early Qur'anic fragments collected by Jean-Louis Asselin de Cherville from the ʿAmr mosque in Fustat explains the suggestion of the committee of the Academy who formulated the subject matter. Its members, Ernest Renan, Joseph Reinaud, Armand-Pierre Caussin de Perceval and Jules Mohl, may also have been aware of the leaves, which were in the possession of Jean-Joseph Marcel, a member of the French expedition to Egypt who brought back with him a handsome sample of fragments taken from the same source.[3] Three essays were sent to the Academy. One dealt handsomely with the peculiarities of the early Qur'anic manuscripts. Its author, Michele Amari, had actually been working on the Parisian collection.[4] However, its contribution was eclipsed by that of Theodor Nöldeke, which was translated into German and became the standard work on the Qur'an: the *Geschichte des Qorâns* [*History of the Qur'an*].[5] Nöldeke

1 J.C.G. Adler, *Descriptio codicum quorumdam cuficorum partes Corani exhibentium in Bibliotheca regia hafniensi et ex iisdem de scriptura Arabum observationes novæ, Præmittitur disquisitio generalis de arte scribendi apud Arabes ex ipsis auctoribus arabicis adhuc ineditis sumta*, Altona, 1780, p. 27.

2 Séance du 26 [juin 1857], *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 1857, p. 139. See also F. Déroche, La genèse de la *Geschichte des Qorâns*, in *Les origines du Coran, le Coran des origines*, F. Déroche ed. (forthcoming).

3 O. Vasilyeva, Oriental manuscripts in the National Library of Russia, *Manuscripta Orientalia* 2–2 (June 1996), p. 20; F. Déroche, *La transmission écrite du Coran dans les débuts de l'islam. Le codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, [Texts and studies on the Qur'ān 5] Leiden-Boston, 2009, pp. 8–16.

4 M. Amari, Bibliographie primitive du Coran, ed. by. H. Dérenbourg, in *Centenario della nascita di Michele Amari*, i, Palermo, 1910, pp. 1–22.

5 T. Nöldeke, *Geschichte des Qorâns*, Göttingen, 1860. The work was later revised and expanded

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had been able to look at early fragments, in Berlin and Gotha, but they were later than those in Paris and their peculiarities were minor in comparison with the standard text of the Qur'an. He therefore came to the conclusion already reached a century earlier by Adler.

In the second edition of the *Geschichte des Qorâns*, this view was qualified by Gotthelf Bergsträsser and Otto Pretzl who used the evidence gained from the earliest copies of the Qur'an in their presentation of the later history of the text.[6] They actually started collecting photographs, which were long thought to have disappeared and are now part of the *Corpus coranicum* project led by the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften.[7] This effort, launched in the 1930s, did actually only bring limited results and the research in this field came to an almost complete halt for half a century. The debate started at the end of the 1970s by John Wansbrough's iconoclast views about the date at which the Qur'an was compiled as a text, brought about a keener interest for any kind of evidence of the Qur'anic text existence before the third (AH)/ninth (AD) century.[8]

What kind of argument supports earlier dates for manuscripts in general and Qur'anic copies in particular? In the Islamic tradition, the question was to some extent answered by the various copies, which were related to the third caliph, ʿUthmān. In addition to those which are known through sources to have been preserved in various places in pre-modern times and have sometimes drawn the scholarly interest they deserve,[9] a few manuscripts are today said to be the caliph's own copy.[10] The argument can be extended to other copies attributed

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by Nöldeke's students, Friedrich Schwally, Gotthelf Bergsträsser and Otto Pretzl (*Geschichte des Qorâns*, 2nd edition, Leipzig, 1909–1938).

6 G. Bergsträsser and O. Pretzl, op. cit., 2nd edition, vol. 3, pp. 249–274.

7 See the *Corpus coranicum* website (http://koran.bbaw.de/materialien/gotthelf-bergstraesser-archiv).

8 J. Wansbrough, *Quranic studies, Sources and methods of scriptural interpretation*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977 [London Oriental series, 31], pp. 43–52.

9 See for instance E. Quatremère, Sur le goût des livres chez les orientaux, *Journal Asiatique* série 3, vol. 6 (1838), pp. 41–45; J.M. Mouton, De quelques reliques conservées à Damas au Moyen Age, Stratégie politique et religiosité populaire sous les Bourides, *Annales islamologiques* 27 (1993), pp. 247–254; P. Buresi, Une relique almohade: l'utilisation du coran (attribué à ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān [644–656]) de la grande mosquée de Cordoue, in *Lieux de cultes: aires votives, temples, églises, mosquées. IXe colloque international sur l'histoire et l'archéologie de l'Afrique du Nord antique et médiévale. Tripoli, 19–25 février 2005*, Paris [Etudes d'Antiquités africaines], 2008, pp. 273–280.

10 Ṣ. al-Munajjid (*Dirāsāt fī tārīkh al-khaṭṭ al-ʿarabī mundhu bidāyatihi ilā nihāyat al-ʿaṣr*

to other prominent figures of the same period, like ʿAli b. Abī Ṭālib or his son, Ḥusayn. In some cases, the attribution relies on a colophon, but in other cases, we are just dealing with a word-of-mouth attribution—as with the copy in Tashkent for instance. One should add that it is not always clear whether these copies are a manuscript in the hand of the caliph—the copy ʿUthmān is said to have been reading when he was killed—or one of the *maṣāḥif al-amṣār*, in other words the copies he sent to the main cities of his empire. Salah al-din al-Munajjid devoted a chapter of his *Dirāsāt* to the question and came to the conclusion that, in spite of their age, they were not linked to ʿUthmān or any of the persons mentioned.[11] More recently, Tayyar Altıkulaç published a facsimile of three such copies, kept one in the Topkapı Sarayı Library,[12] the second one in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum[13]—also in Istanbul—and the third one in Cairo.[14] Using the information found in the specialised treatises devoted to the *rasm ʿuthmāni*, he also concluded that the three copies could not be those of ʿUthmān, even if the latter's name appeared in the colophon of the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum copy—which is actually a gross forgery. As far as ʿUthmān's own copy is concerned, the question was actually answered at an early date by Mālik b. Anas who, when asked about it, answered flatly that it had disappeared.[15]

Do we have extant copies contemporary with the reign of the caliph? This question is difficult to answer. The doubt which has been cast on the date of the Qur'an, for instance by John Wansbrough, may explain the caution with which some scholars viewed the possibility that manuscripts or fragments of the Qur'an of an early date might have survived. However, traditional Arabic sources insist on the fact that the Qur'an was transcribed before the middle of the first century of Islam. The accounts about the writing down of the Qur'an

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al-umawī—Etudes de paléographie arabe, Beirut, 1972, pp. 50–60) listed a few of these manuscripts, but many more can be found (see in ch. 4 MS Dublin, CBL Is 1404 for instance).

11 Ibid.

12 *Al-muṣḥaf al-sharīf* (in Arabic). *Al-muṣḥaf al-sharif attributed to ʿUthmān bin ʿAffān* (*The copy at the Topkapı Palace Museum*), ed. by Tayyar Altıkulaç, Istanbul, 1428/2007.

13 *Hz. Osman'a nisbet edilen mushaf-ı şarif. Türk ve Islâm Eserleri nüshası. Al-muṣḥaf al-sharīf al-mansūb ilā ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān* (in Arabic), ed. by Tayyar Altıkulaç, Istanbul, 2007.

14 *Al-muṣḥaf al-sharīf* (in Arabic). *Al-muṣḥaf al-sharif attributed to ʿUthmān bin ʿAffān* (*The copy at al-Mashhad al-Husayni in Cairo*), ed. by Tayyar Altıkulaç, 2 vols., Istanbul, 1430/2009.

15 A. Jahdani, Du *fiqh* à la codicologie. Quelques opinions de Malik (m. 179/796) sur le Coran-codex, *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 56 (2006) [Actes de la conférence internationale sur les manuscrits du Coran (Bologne, 26–28 septembre 2002)], p. 274.

as the result of a decision taken by Abū Bakr, the first caliph, then by ʿUthmān, are well known.[16] Harald Motzki, using text critical methods, was able to show that these reports were circulating by the extreme end of the seventh or early eighth century AD.[17] According to him,

> the two traditions which tell the history of the *muṣḥaf* and are widely adopted in Muslim scholarship were both brought into circulation by Ibn Shihāb [al-Zuhri] and can be dated to the first quarter of the 2nd century AH. The date of al-Zuhri's death [124/742] is the terminus post quem.[18]

He would go a step further and consider that al-Zuhrī's informants can be considered as the first link and that the information can therefore be traced back to the last decades of the first (AH)/seventh (AD) century.[19] On the other hand, Estelle Whelan collected from various Arabic sources indications about copyists who were transcribing the Qur'anic text by the end of the first century AH and used the epigraphic evidence of the Dome of the Rock to support the idea that the written Qur'an was circulating during the second half of the first century AH.[20]

Arabic sources have also been used for the more general issue of the history of the Arabic script—with the idea of getting a tool for dating purposes. Early Western scholarship in this field tried to rely on traditional knowledge in order to build an Arabic palaeography. The idea that the Arabic sources had in store the key to this history was circulating at an early date and was formulated in a more formal way by Adler by the end of the eighteenth century.[21] The sources were actually ripe with names of scripts, which seemed to provide a sound basis for a typology. The traditional way of looking at the scripts is of course in itself something very important as it suggests that local styles were closely involved in the diffusion of the text, as many scripts are named according to their place of origin, rather than to the period in which they were used. However, the texts did not provide any description which could help in the identification of actual scripts found on manuscripts—even in the case of the so called Kufic.

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16 See F. Schwally, op. cit., 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1919, vol. II.

17 H. Motzki, "The collection of the Qur'ān, A reconsideration of Western views in light of recent methodological development", *Der Islam* 78 (2001), pp. 1–34.

18 Ibid., p. 29.

19 Ibid., p. 31.

20 E. Whelan, Evidence for the early codification of the Qur'an, *JAOS* 118 (1998), pp. 10–14.

21 J.G.C. Adler, op. cit., pp. 9–14.

In spite of the somewhat disappointing results of this approach, it provided a clue about the earliest scripts. As early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy had found in the *Fihrist* of al-Nadīm a short account of the external appearance of the script of Mecca.[22] Al-Nadīm's description has often been quoted, but in the context of a history of the Qur'anic manuscript during Umayyad times, it is an important piece of evidence:

> The first Arabic scripts were the Meccan and after that the Medinan, then the Basran, then the Kufan. As regards the Mekkan and Medinan, there is in its [*sic*] *alifs* a turning to the right and an elevation of the vertical strokes; and in its [*sic*] form, there is a slight inclination.[23]

The evolution of the interpretation of this text has already been recorded. Sketchy as it may be, it allows us to link a name with a specific style, even if it should be understood that some local differences had existed at that time. The history of the concept of *ḥijāzī* script is clear in this respect: the various authors took for granted that the script of Mecca and that of Medina were not so different from one another as to prevent subsuming both of them under the same name, derived from the region of the Arabian peninsula where both cities are located.[24] Actually, one can argue that the decision taken by Muhammad to have Meccan prisoners to redeem their freedom by teaching Medinan children how to write can be taken as an indication of the relative closeness of the scripts in question.[25] Two aspects are described: the general appearance (vertical extension of the ascenders and slanting) and a specificity of the *alif*.

The validity of the use of al-Nadīm's account as a basis for an identification of the early Qur'anic copies has been questioned in an unpublished paper by Estelle Whelan whose point has been taken up by Sheila Blair.[26] According to her, *ḥijāzī* is "a scholarly artefact based on a series of methodological missteps."[27] First, the characteristics of a single letter are insufficient to define a

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22 A.I. Silvestre de Sacy, Mémoire sur l'origine et les anciens monumens de la littérature parmi les Arabes, *Mémoires de littérature tirés des registres de l'Académie royale des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 50, 1808, pp. 253–254.

23 Al-Nadīm, *K. al-Fihrist*, ed. R. Tajaddud, Tehran, 1971, p. 9.

24 See for instance F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), pp. 109–117.

25 L. Caetani, *Annali dell'Islâm* I, Milan, 1905, p. 496, § 80.

26 *Islamic calligraphy*, Edinburgh, 2006, p. 108.

27 Ibid. She also overlooks the fact that the four names are repeated in the following paragraph under the heading "Qur'anic scripts" (al-Nadīm, op. cit., p. 9).

script, second al-Nadīm is not dealing with Qur'anic scripts but with "the earliest Arabic writing in general."[28] On this last point, Whelan obviously missed a crucial comment by Adolf Grohmann who had already noted that it was "quite important to state that this style of writing (= *ḥijāzī*) is … a secular script."[29] Moreover, she anachronistically retrojected the concept of Qur'anic scripts to the earliest period of Qur'anic manuscripts production in order to sustain her criticism. Actually, the study of the Umayyad period may help us in finding out the moment when the concept emerged. As for the first point, it is methodologically true that the description of a single letter cannot serve as a basis for a palaeographical typology but, as we have seen, al-Nadīm does not only describe the *alif*, he also hints at the general appearance of these scripts. One wonders nevertheless why the quest for methodological coherence underpinning Whelan's critic has not been extended to the whole field of Arabic palaeographical studies and led to the elimination of any traditional or tradition related name of a script which is not based on a full description in the sources. In most instances, the latter do not even contain the description of a single letter.

In principle, when trying to reconstruct the history of the transmission of the Qur'anic text in Umayyad times, we should find information in the manuscripts themselves. A later author, al-Dānī, saw an Umayyad copy of the Qur'an with a colophon indicating the name of the copyist and the date of the transcription.[30] However, with the exception of the spurious colophons, which were mentioned previously, no such direct evidence prior to the third/ninth century has survived, probably because the first and last folios of a manuscript, where information about the copy can be found, are the most exposed to wear and tear and the first to disappear. Actually, most of the manuscripts we shall be dealing with are in a fragmentary state and were preserved in geniza-like depots in mosques.[31] The fragmentary state of the evidence at hand and the lack of any direct information as to the date of the copies are actually a major impediment in the study of the early material and have been used as an argument against its dating prior to the third/ninth century.

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28 Ibid.

29 A. Grohmann, The problem of dating early Qur'âns, *Der Islam* 33 (1958), pp. 221–222.

30 Al-Dānī, *al-Muqniʿ fī maʿrifa marsūm maṣāḥif ahl al-amṣār*, ed. M.A. Dahmān, Damas, n.d., p. 88.

31 J. Sadan, Genizah and genizah-like practices in Islamic and Jewish traditions. Customs concerning the disposal of worn-out Sacred Books in the Middle Ages, according to an Ottoman source, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 43 (1986), pp. 37–58.

However, it seems nowadays possible to state that we do have more or less substantial parts of copies which can be dated to the Umayyad period through the combination of various approaches: palaeography, philology, art history and, when possible, C14 analysis of the parchment used for the transcription of the text. Some of the manuscripts which are part of the *ḥijāzī* corpus may even predate the Umayyad period,[32] but there is for the moment little which can be argued in support of a very early date.

Palaeography and codicology are of course crucial in the study of the early copies of the Qurʾan and play a major role in the study of the Umayyad *muṣḥaf*s which, as we have seen, do not provide direct evidence about their age. Codicology may contribute in our understanding of the material, although its fragmentary state makes such basic issues as the dominant kind of gathering or the bindings completely inaccessible. The study of the scripts on the other hand can rely on the textual evidence provided by al-Nadīm's description of the script of Mecca as a starting point. The later part of the Umayyad period, with the development of formal scripts, is to some extent easier to analyse than the moment when the *ḥijāzī* style predominates. The accumulation of material during the last decades allows now for the constitution of series of documents sharing some characteristics and sometimes related between them. The comparison with inscriptions, especially those which were discovered in Saudi Arabia during the last decades, can also be fruitful.[33]

The validity of palaeographic studies has however been questioned. Among the critics levelled against this approach, those expounded by Sheila Blair, largely based on Estelle Whelan's views, require some consideration. Although part of her point is linked with untenable hypotheses, they call for comments as they take a methodological stance and focus on problems similar to those we shall face when dealing with some of the Umayyad scripts. Criticising the typology of Abbasid styles proposed by the present writer, she first notes that "nowhere is it demonstrated that the criteria chosen reveal significant differences in scripts, not just variations of an individual hand."[34] She then points to the fact that the "lack of clarity in defining styles is clear from the high number enumerated, … at least nineteen variants among the seventy examples … with some manuscripts identified as a combination of styles."[35] Blair bases her

32 In the following pages, the adjective *ḥijāzī* will only be used, unless stated otherwise, in reference to the script, without any implication as far as the place of copy or the *qirāʾāt* are concerned.

33 A. George, *The rise of Islamic calligraphy*, London, 2010, pp. 28–30.

34 S. Blair, op. cit., 109.

35 Ibid., pp. 109–110.

comments on the catalogue of the N.D. Khalili collection of Islamic art, forgetting that it was an offshoot of the study of the Bibliothèque Nationale collection where 263 fragments were arranged under twenty-six headings,[36] corresponding to seven larger clusters. There are actually some disparities between the former, which are sometimes represented by one item only, and others with twenty[37] or even fifty-five items.[38] The repetition of the same style on so many copies, and with some minute differences from one example to the next, is in itself indicative of the fact that we are dealing with a style, not with the idiosyncrasies and the production of individual hands. The latter can be recognised in the slight variations between two manuscripts attributed to the same style. A survey of the various collections accessible showed that a few scripts, notably D I and D III, were represented throughout the whole spectrum of book production, from calligraphic masterpieces to crude renditions. The linguistic model of concentric circles helps understanding the various levels of realisation of a common repertory, from highly skilled calligraphers to hobbledehoy hands.[39] It therefore calls for categories for those fragments, which attempt to imitate the best examples with limited success.[40] The utilisation of this typology by other scholars points to the fact that it is at least partially valid in other contexts than the Egyptian material, which makes up the bulk of the Parisian collection.

The series are crucial for the typology and it is certainly a moot point whether some of the groups with few items, like C, should be partly reconsidered.[41] Palaeography is a matter of patience and prudence. Many problems may

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36 The book is mentioned in the bibliography, but is only globally quoted in n. 44, p. 154.

37 F. Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran: Aux origines de la calligraphie coranique* [Bibliothèque Nationale, Catalogue des manuscrits arabes, 2e partie, Manuscrits musulmans, I/1], Paris, 1983, pp. 70–74.

38 Ibid., pp. 84–97.

39 G. Khan, *Arabic papyri. Selected material from the Khalili collection* [Studies in the Khalili collection, vol. I], Londres, 1992, p. 39.

40 'D commun', etc.

41 This is not considered as a problem by Blair who readily admits the validity of Whelan's "Group 2" with a single manuscript, Dublin, CBL MS 1404 (p. 135, n. 47). I questioned Whelan's choice of manuscripts, that is to say the first step of her research: she was obviously trying to produce a typology, but clearly never embarked on a survey of the material in order to build up a corpus, then to establish series. What she did had more to do with a "supermarket approach", taking items which were supposed to demonstrate her point without any wider investigation of the context. Whelan's sometimes naive remarks are precisely due to a limited experience with the early Qur'anic manuscripts (see for instance p. 124 or p. 132, n. 68). Answering my own critics about "Group 2", Blair contended

be solved once more material has become available for study and the palaeographer has to be careful not mishandling the material. The *ḥijāzī* is a case in point. When I first investigated these scripts, few *ḥijāzī* manuscripts were published or available. Instead of refraining from devising unsatisfactory subcategories for the eight fragments in the Bibliothèque Nationale,[42] I decided to submit them to the same typological approach as the rest of the material and failed to identify the highly individual aspect of these hands. Conversely, in 1983, I had to leave aside the script which will be discussed in chapter 3 among those I was unable to classify because I had no parallel. The comparatively high number of styles should not be seen as a problem: in the fourth/tenth century, al-Nadīm himself knew as many as sixteen styles of early Qur'anic scripts,[43] and a later calligrapher boasted that he had mastered seventy styles.[44] A last point: far from focusing only on a few shapes of letters, the method also takes into account a more global approach to these formal scripts. Blair strangely omits an important point: an analysis of the two largest groups, B II and D I, provided an insight into the "rules" governing each of them (script module, number of lines).[45] Recently, Alain George's deep insight into the proportions of these scripts has given a new dimension to the palaeographical investigation.[46]

Blair fails to grasp an important point when she notes that "the method overlooks … the changing form of the letters which can assume different shapes and heights depending on the other letters in a word."[47] Her remark could apply to later hands, but in Abbasid times the scripts are composed scripts and their

that Whelan's wild speculations about the milieu in which she believed the copy was produced (which she terms "established provenance and representativeness of a broad juxtaposition") fully justified this choice (ibid.).

42 The ninth fragment of this group is a later example which I suggested to identify as an archaising trend.

43 Al-Nadīm, op. cit., p. 9.

44 So says al-Rawandī in his *Rāḥat al-ṣudūr* (see D. Meneghini Correale, Il capitolo sulla scrittura nel *Rāḥat al-ṣudūr* di Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Rāwandī, *Annali di Ca' Foscari* 33/3, Serie orientale 25, p. 231).

45 F. Déroche, A propos d'une série de manuscrits coraniques anciens, in *Les manuscrits du Moyen-Orient*, F. Déroche ed. [Varia Turcica VIII], Istanbul-Paris, 1989, pp. 101–111; id., The Qur'ān of Amāǧūr, *Manuscripts of the Middle-East* 5 (1990–1991), pp. 59–66.

46 A. George, op. cit.; see also id., The geometry of the Qur'an of Amājūr: a preliminary study of proportion in early Islamic calligraphy, *Muqarnas* 20 (2003), pp. 1–15; id., The geometry of early Qur'anic manuscripts, *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 9–1 (2007), pp. 78–110.

47 S. Blair, op. cit., p. 110.

stability is remarkable as far as the shape and size of the letters is concerned.[48] In this respect, a direct experience with the material is crucial since the picture of a folio cannot convey this regularity over a whole manuscript. This stability can actually be approached from another (and not exclusive) point of view: George's recent researches have demonstrated that a grid governing the size of the letters maintained their dimensions in quite a constant way.[49]

The issue of chronology is of course crucial in palaeography. According to Blair, this "methodology (i.e. palaeography) … favours linear development over regional variation"[50] and strayed from a purely formal arrangement (my A to E groups) to the assumption of a chronological order. As a matter of fact, this is hardly the case. On palaeographic grounds, a *ḥijāzī* style, B Ia, was included in Group B because a diachronic continuity could be recognised in this case between the early period and the third/ninth century.[51] On the other hand, I made it clear from the beginning that the styles were overlapping[52] and that there were possibly "local schools" and "regional peculiarities".[53] As early as 1983, I wondered whether the script families were "a style used simultaneously by various workshops or conversely … ⟨had to be⟩ attributed to a specific workshop or even to a sole scribe."[54] The study of the Umayyad *muṣḥaf* production actually faces similar problems as will become clear soon and the approach which had been used previously with the early Abbasid scripts will be applied to the formal scripts of the period. There remains no doubt that the comparison with inscriptions, especially those which were discovered in Saudi Arabia during the last decades, will also be fruitful.[55] Over the last thirty years,

48 With the exception of final *yāʾ*, and a few cases of "superposition" involving the *jim/ḥāʾ/khāʾ* letter.

49 A. George, op. cit., pp. 55–74.

50 S. Blair, op. cit., p. 110. This critic is also present in Y. Dutton, An Umayyad fragment of the Qur'an and its dating, *Journal of Qur'anic studies* 9–2 (2007), p. 82.

51 F. Déroche, op. cit. (1983), p. 37 and pl. IX. However, I stressed that the script "should be considered a form of Hijazi" (F. Déroche, *The Abbasid tradition, Qur'āns of the 8th to the 10th centuries* [The Nasser D. Khalili collection of Islamic art, I], London, 1992, p. 35). For the same reason it would have been methodologically more advisable to include H IV into Group C.

52 F. Déroche, op. cit. (1983), p. 14.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid., p. 50.

55 A. George, op. cit., pp. 28–30. M.M. al-Azami, *The history of the Qur'anic text, from revelation to compilation. A comparative study with the Old and New Testaments*, Leicester, 2003, pp. 126–128 (notably fig. 9.13, dated 80/699–700 and 9.14, dated 84/703 taken from S. al-Rashid, *Kitābāt islāmiyya min Makka al-Mukarrama*, Riyadh, 1416/1995, pp. 26–29 and 160–161).

palaeography has helped to classify what was before "a largely indistinct mass"[56] and although many questions still remain unanswered, it will remain a fundamental tool in the study of the manuscripts of this period as well as from later ages. Far from arbitrarily cutting the material from its context, it allowed to organise and date it in order to understand its complex history—which had not been achieved before.

Philology can in its turn be of some help in organising the material: the evolution of Qur'anic orthography in Umayyad times contributes to a rough chronological distribution of the evidence.[57] In this case again, no steady development has to be expected since we know from sources like Mālik b. Anas that towards the middle of the second/eighth century some milieux were strongly in favour of the original orthography of the text.[58] Some *muṣḥaf*s from late Umayyad times may therefore be closer in this respect to the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* than to strictly contemporary copies.

Art history contributes decisively to the dating of Umayyad manuscripts. Although Qur'anic manuscripts from the first three centuries of the hijra were until recently seldom integrated into art historical studies,[59] art historians started playing a crucial role in the field of manuscript studies since they took a decisive step. First Marilyn Jenkins,[60] then a little later Hans Caspar von Bothmer[61] associated the epithet "Umayyad" with manuscripts, actually with a manuscript: the famous Qur'anic copy found in Sanaa (DaM Inv. 20.33–1) with its striking opening page with the depiction of two arched buildings. In principle, the study of the illumination found on a given manuscript allows one to relate it to other artistic contemporary productions and thus to suggest a date for it. Of course, many manuscripts are not illuminated, but they can in turn be related to others for their script, orthography, etc.

The contribution of C14 dating to the overall history of the handwritten transmission of the Qur'an in Umayyad times should not be neglected, but the results of such analysis need in the present writer's opinion to be taken cautiously. The role of C14 dating has been increasing over the last years since it helped answering the problem of dating early copies on what seemed a more

56 A. George, op. cit., p. 19.

57 F. Déroche, op. cit. (1983), pp. 30–35.

58 A. Jahdani, op. cit., p. 273.

59 See for instance R. Ettinghausen, *Peinture arabe*, Geneva, 1962, pp. 167–170.

60 M. Jenkins, A vocabulary of Umayyad ornament, in *Maṣāḥif Ṣanʿāʾ*, Kuwait, 1985, pp. 19–23.

61 H.C. von Bothmer, Architekturbilder im Koran. Eine Prachthandschrift der Umayyadenzeit aus dem Yemen, *Pantheon* 45 (1987), pp. 4–20.

reliable basis than palaeography. Moreover, the reactivity of the tools used for the measurements has been increasing over the years and the calibration dataset has become more accurate.[62] Conservators agree now more easily to allow for some parchment to be sampled in this process since the amount of raw material required for an analysis has been dramatically reduced. But one has to remain aware of the fact that the results are to be matched with other evidence. The analysis of dated parchment will certainly lead to a higher accuracy in the calibration process. For the moment, it underlines the limitations of this technique. The famous "Qur'an of the Nurse" is one of the best-documented manuscripts at hand. Its colophon and its deed of waqf allow us to know that the copy was completed in 410/1020.[63] An analysis performed on a piece of parchment taken from the manuscript helped to evaluate the accuracy of the measurements. A French laboratory determined the radiocarbon age of the parchment as BP 1130±30.[64] This result was then calibrated and gave a date range comprised between 871 and 986 AD, with a probability of 95%. The most probable dates, arranged in decreasing order of probability were 937, 895 and 785 AD. The closest result, that is to say 937 AD, is separated by eighty-three years from the date provided by the colophon. If we use the upper limit of the date range, that is to say 986 AD, the difference still amounts to fifty-four years, that is to say half a century.

The results may also be closer to the data provided by the manuscripts themselves. Another copy, which bears a *waqfiyya* date of 295/907 has been dated by the same laboratory to BP 1205±30.[65] The calibrated radiocarbon age

62 Y. Dutton, op. cit., pp. 57–87. On the other hand, some results are disappointing when they suggest a wide time span for the production of the parchment (see for instance the dating of Saint Petersburg, IOS E 20, between 775 AD and 995 AD in E. Rezvan, On the dating of an "'Uthmanic Qur'an" from Saint Petersburg, *Manuscripta Orientalia* 6–3 [September 2000], pp. 19–22).

63 M. al-Muqdād al-Wartātanī, *al-burnus fī Bārīz* ... /Si Mohamed el Mokdad el Ouertatani, *Le burnous à Paris. Récit du voyage effectué en France et en Suisse*, Tunis, 1332/1914, p. 204 and fig. between p. 204 and 205; B. Roy, Un don de la gouvernante de Badis à la grande mosquée de Kairouan, *Bulletin archéologique du comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques*, 1921, pp. 123–126; B. Roy and P. Poinssot, *Inscriptions arabes de Kairouan*, [Publications de l'Institut des Hautes études de Tunis, II/1], Paris, 1950, pp. 27–32, nº 9 and fig. 7–8; M. al-Nayyāl, *Al-maktaba al-āthariyya bi-l-Qayrawān. 'Arḍ—Dalīl*, Tunis, 1963, p. 14, nº 1, p. 19 and fig. pp. 15–16. An illustration of the "colophon" is also found in G. Marçais and L. Poinssot, *Objets kairouanais, IXe au XIIIe siècle, Reliures verreries, cuivres et bronzes, bijoux*, t. I, Paris, 1948, pp. 310–311 and fig. 16.

64 Ref. Lyon-5354 (SacA-11954).

65 Ref. Lyon-5355 (SacA-11955).

yielded a time range from 716 to 891 AD and the most probable dates, according to the laboratory were, once again in decreasing order of probability: 791, 806 and 780 AD. The most probable result, 791 AD, is 116 years earlier than the actual date of the *waqfiyya*, although it may be objected that the manuscript may have been transcribed slightly earlier. On the other hand, the upper value of the date range, that is to say 891 AD, is very close—predating the *waqfiyya* by only sixteen years. The methods used seem however to be fairly accurate as far as the measurements are concerned. In order to evaluate on the one hand their reliability from a purely physical point of view and on the other to check the date of three controversial copies of the Qurʾan, I took a sample from each of the three manuscripts, then divided each sample into two pieces and gave to two different laboratories a set of three pieces. The agreement between the two laboratories was obvious: the readings were very close to each other, 677 to 858 AD against 676 to 869 AD in the first case, 671 to 773 AD against 650 to 764 AD in the second and 684 to 867 AD against 672 to 853 AD in the third one. It should be added, and this is certainly one of the most beneficial results of this approach, that the three manuscripts were attributed to the early fifth/eleventh century on the basis of a *waqfiyya* associated with them. The results of the C14 analysis definitively discarded this option and the palaeographical attribution to the third/ninth century was confirmed. As a conclusion, and although recent publications seem overconfident in their reliance on the C14 method, the last word should stay with the philologist, the historian or the palaeographer.

This becomes especially clear when such measurements provide results which simply cannot be accepted. Two samples from the famous Sanaa palimpsest (Sanaa, DaM Inv. 01–27.1) were recently dated with this method.[66] According to the laboratory, one folio was produced between 543 and 643 AD whereas the other one was made between 433 and 599 AD.[67] Later dates would be easier to explain by a contamination. Here the problem may lie with the conditions (arid or semi-arid climate) under which the cattle, the hides of which were later turned into parchment, was raised.

The progress accomplished in the dating of the material and the understanding of the chronology of the period cannot hide the fact that the limits of the period remain an especially thorny issue, the more so because the time span is

66 An analysis of another folio of the manuscript has been performed in the USA, see B. Sadeghi and U. Bergmann, The Codex of a Companion of the Prophet and the Qurʾan of the Prophet, *Arabica* 57 (2010), pp. 348–353. See ch. 2.

67 I owe the results to the kindness of Christian Robin whom I thank heartily.

comparatively short. The results of C14 analysis are quite valuable as a first indication of the age of the copies, but their accuracy is insufficient when it comes to arranging the material within a period which lasted less than a century. As we do not have material dated directly, it is impossible to be absolutely certain that, for instance, some of the manuscripts which I consider as late Umayyad were not actually produced during the first decade(s) of Abbasid rule: copyists and illuminators did not completely change their habits overnight although they may have adapted their production to the wishes of their patrons. There is no doubt that with more material published our understanding of the developments which marked the middle of the second/eighth century will gain in accuracy.

A geographical attribution of the material remains unfortunately beyond reach. Its inclusion in one of the four large deposits which helped preserving some of the early Qurʾanic manuscripts up to the present does not entail that it was produced in the same place. The *qirāʾāt*, as perceived from the division of the text into verses or through the vocalisation when it begins to be used, have been scrutinised in order to deduce the place of origin of the copies.[68] The conclusions of such investigations should be taken cautiously as we have no certainty that the *qirāʾāt* of the Umayyad period were similar to those which we know. In addition, we do not know the geographical distribution of the various systems during the period under consideration. Clues which would allow the ascription to a place of at least some copies have yet to be discovered.

Why identify more precisely the early copies of the Qur'an? What can be learned from them? In the traditional Muslim view, only the recited text matters. When the al-Azhar specialists convened to produce a reliable edition of the Qur'an towards 1920, they never thought of looking for the earliest written witnesses, had they known how to identify them, but used in the course of their work the specialised literature on the *qirāʾāt* or the orthography which developed in Muslim scholarly circles from the second/eighth century onwards.[69]

First, these manuscripts are important for our knowledge of the state of the Qur'an at an early date. The evidence they provide about the early compilation of the text helps closing the debate which was opened by the "hyper-critical school" of thought. Second, as exemplified by the Sanaa palimpsest in the most dramatic way, they provide information about the Qur'anic revelations that

68 See for instance Y. Dutton, op. cit., pp. 81–82.

69 G. Bergsträsser, Plan eines Apparatus Criticus zum Koran, *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Abteilung* 1930, Heft 7, Munich, 1930, pp. 4–6.

have not been preserved by the Muslim tradition. Third, these manuscripts are our only source, imperfect as it may be, about the oral tradition which they partly reflect. Much work has still to be done in order to understand some peculiarities of the written text which may correspond to older oral renditions, but some specificities found in the early copies point in that direction. Fourth, in a very understandable way, although it may to some extent contradict the traditional point of view, the early manuscripts can provide clues about some readings or on the later orthography. Fifth, the dramatic change in the appearance of copies, which I hope to show, suggests that the perception and the role of these copies in Islamic culture and society underwent a deep transformation during the Umayyad period. They show the first attempts at producing manuscripts of the highest quality and set standards for the later development of the Islamic book. Finally, they provide us with a direct insight into the culture and the faith of the first Muslim communities. The history of the Qurʾanic text may be the subject of a debate, although in my view it is reflected in its handwritten transmission. On the other hand and beyond any doubt, the *muṣḥaf*—that is to say the object in the shape of a book which contains the Revelation—has a history. The present book does not intend to answer all these points, which would require to have the material from this period published in a more systematic way. It aims however at providing new information and fresh insights into the history of the *muṣḥaf* during Umayyad times.

The period under consideration, extending from the end of the conflict between ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya (41/660) and the fall of the Umayyad dynasty in 132/750, was also a time of momentous change. The centre of the new empire was transferred to Syria and Damascus became its capital. With the advent of the caliphate of Marwān b. al-Ḥakam and the end of Ibn al-Zubayr's revolt in 73/692 began a period of particular importance, notably under the reigns of ʿAbd al-Malik (from 65/685 to 86/705) and of his successor, al-Walīd (from 86/705 to 96/715). The administration of the empire underwent radical transformations and a new image of the state emerged. A very significant step was taken when Arabic became the language—and the script—of the administration. The construction of impressive buildings, notably the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, demonstrates that the rulers were promoting Islam as the religion of the new state—as the Dome inscriptions also make clear. Various elements suggest that the administration became more efficient, notably in the collection of the taxes, and that the state had thus many more resources at its disposal than had been the case previously. As a result, Arabic as a language spread among conquered populations and Islam was propagated across the Empire.

CHAPTER 1

Transcribing the Qurʾan in Early Umayyad Times: The *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*

The *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* was found among Qurʾanic fragments which were kept in the ʿAmr mosque in Fustat until the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries when two French scholars, Jean-Joseph Marcel and Jean-Louis Asselin de Cherville, managed to buy a sizeable amount of leaves.[1] The folios we know today are divided among four collections, which are, in order of size, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris (formerly Asselin de Cherville collection),[2] the National Library of Russia in Saint Petersburg (formerly Marcel collection), the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana in the Vatican[3] and the Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic art in London.[4] The ninety-eight parchment folios which I was able to trace (others may surface in the future) measure 33×24cm and contain roughly 45 percent of the Qurʾanic text as we know it today. We can infer from these data that the original manuscript comprised between 210 and 220 folios, which means that some 17 to 18 square meters of parchment were required in order to produce this quarto volume of fair size.[5] As the other *ḥijāzī* manuscripts, the *Codex*

1 See F. Déroche, *La transmission écrite du Coran dans les débuts de l'islam. Le codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, [Texts and studies on the Qurʾān 5] Leiden-Boston, 2009, pp. 10–13 and 14–16. The following chapter is based on the results of the research published in this book.

2 F. Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran: Aux origines de la calligraphie coranique* [Bibliothèque Nationale, Catalogue des manuscrits arabes, 2e partie, Manuscrits musulmans, I/1], Paris, 1983, pp. 59–60, nos 2 and 3. A facsimile of the part of the *Codex* corresponding to f. 1–56 has been published by F. Déroche and S. Noja Noseda, *Le manuscrit Arabe 328 (a) de la Bibliothèque nationale de France* [Sources de la transmission manuscrite du texte coranique I, Les manuscrits de style hijâzî, 1], Lesa, 1998. The study of the Saint Petersburg part of the manuscript allowed to determine that the f. 57–70 of Paris, BnF Arabe 328 (described separately in the 1983 catalogue, as Arabe 328 b) were actually part of the same codex (see F. Déroche, op. cit., p. 22). The manuscript can also be accessed on the Gallica website of the BnF (gallica.bnf.fr).

3 Vat. Ar. 1605/1, see G. Levi della Vida, *Frammenti coranici in carattere cufico nella Biblioteca Vaticana*, Vatican, 1947, p. IV, and 1–2, reproduced on pl. 1.

4 KFQ 60, see F. Déroche, *The Abbasid tradition, Qurʾāns of the 8th to the 10th centuries* [The Nasser D. Khalili collection of Islamic art, I], London, 1992, p. 32 and pl. on p. 30.

5 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), p. 23.

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Parisino-petropolitanus is a codex, that is to say the dominant variety of book of the Late Antiquity.[6] Its gatherings are quaternions with the sides of same kind facing each other—flesh facing flesh and hair facing hair.[7] This does not mean that the gatherings were obtained by folding. Actually, some "accidents" interrupting the hair-flesh sides sequence (for instance f. 42 to 48 of the Parisian part of the manuscript) show that parchment bifolios equivalent to half a skin were stacked up one above the other and then folded.[8] On the other hand, the chines are located in places which exclude any folding process in the production of the quires.

The text has been transcribed with long lines which are distributed over the whole page, leaving almost no margins—except on the inner side of the folio. This is not the result of later trimmings, which could have eliminated the margins. In many places, the natural edge of the skin has been preserved and coincides roughly with that of the folio.[9] This way of using most of the available parchment surface was clearly the copyists' decision. It was not meant either to keep down the consumption of parchment as the average height of the script is rather important, probably because the copy was meant for public use. The traces of ruling which can be observed here and there concur with the preceding observations: the copyists prepared the transcription and the final appearance of the copy has been planned, although the number of lines varies from one page to the next.[10]

The script follows the custom of this period of not paying much attention to the spaces between the words and within a word when it contains letters which are not connected to each other. Actually, the groups of letters are scattered on the page in a rather regular way. A corollary of this way of handling the script is the possibility of dividing a word at the end of a line when needed—although words are never divided at the end of a page. The origin of this practice has probably to be traced down to the Late Antique tradition of *scriptio continua*.[11]

6 The epistle of ʿAbd al-Masīḥ ibn Isḥāq al-Kindī claims that the early Muslims left the text of the Qur'an in the form of leaves and rolls like the scrolls of the Jews, until the caliph ʿUthmān changed this practice. See P. Casanova, *Mohammed et la fin du monde: étude critique sur l'islam primitif*, Paris, 1911, p. 121; G. Troupeau, 'al-Kindī', *EI*², V, pp. 123–124.

7 F. Déroche et al., *Islamic codicology. An introduction to the study of manuscripts in Arabic script*, London, 2006, pp. 72–74.

8 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), pp. 24–26.

9 See for instance Paris, BnF Arabe 328, f. 2, 5, 6 or Saint Petersburg, NLR, Marcel 18, f. 1, 11 or 22.

10 Very often, the number of lines remains identical when there is a change of hand (see F. Déroche, op. cit., p. 28). In the manuscript, they vary from 21 to 28 lines to the page. Hands B, C and D tend to favour a lower number than A and E.

11 See W. Diem, Untersuchungen zur frühen Geschichte der arabischen Orthographie. IV. Die

The most distinctive feature of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* is the fact that it is the result of teamwork. Five copyists were involved in the transcription of the ninety-eight folios which I was able to trace. The way in which the work was distributed and even the actual number of copyists cannot be definitively established as half of the manuscript is lost.

The most important contributor to the copy of the text is Hand A (fig. 1) who produced seventy-three folios written with 21 to 28 lines to the page in a clear *ḥijāzī* script.[12] He appears first in the manuscript, but he did not work continuously: in six occasions he left his place to a fellow copyist after completing a full recto side, although the verse he was transcribing did not stop at the end of the folio. The same rule was followed by three other scribes—a different situation is found with the fifth one, Hand C. As a result, there is no opening with two hands visible at the same time, one on the verso of a folio and another one on the recto of the next one. The script of Hand A is rather inelegant, but regular and legible. He mostly uses diacritical marks for the *nūn* (about 70 percent of the dots). Three horizontal rows of two elongated dots serve as a separation between the verses.

The second copyist by order of importance is Hand C (fig. 3).[13] His contribution (sixteen folios) coincides with the end of what remains of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*. Between 39: 55 and 41: 31, there is a gap separating the last folio in Hand A from the beginning of the portion in Hand C's script which does not include any contribution by another copyist.[14] The number of lines varies from 21 to 25, but it is most of the time either 22 or 23. His script is crisp and regular, denoting some experience in the field of writing. Hand D indicates that professionals were included in the team, although this copyist does not seem to always have paid much attention to the work if we judge from the many mistakes and corrections found in his contribution. The diacritics are very infrequent and the verse endings are indicated by clusters of four elongated dots arranged in the shape of a square or less often set one above the other in a column.

The other three contributors, B, D and E, worked in close association with A who, from time to time, left them in charge of the transcription of two to

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Schreibung der zusammenhängenden Rede. Zusammenfassung, *Orientalia* NS 52 (1983), pp. 386–387 (§ 242).

12 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), pp. 31–34.

13 Ibid., pp. 37–39.

14 These elements, as well as the impossibility to examine the back of the quires, explain why I decided to describe separately this contribution in the catalogue of the Bibliothèque Nationale (see above).

fourteen pages before turning back to work. The interruptions are concentrated between 3: 195 and 7: 94. Hand B is the most important of the three in terms of their contribution (fig. 2).[15] He wrote the equivalent of seven folios distributed in three short sequences. His script is much sparser with fewer lines to the page (between 21 and 22) and slender letters: his *alif* height is ten times the width of the calamus instead of seven with Hand C and eight with A.[16] Hand B mostly marks with diacritics the *nūn*, then the *bāʾ*. Two parallel columns of three elongated dots separate the verses.

Hands D and E appear as minor contributors to the common task—but, once again, the situation may have been different in the original state of the manuscript. Both wrote the two pages of an opening, in other words the equivalent of a folio. Hand D stands out as the most skilled copyist of the group, with a clearly professional script (fig. 4).[17] The difference with Hand E is striking: the latter is obviously writing strenuously (fig. 5).[18]

Throughout the manuscript, one notices how regularly the ends of the verses are indicated, even if Hand C seems sometimes to have been less rigorous. This contradicts the view expressed by Theodor Nöldeke who, on the basis of later evidence, considered that the division into verses was not a regular feature of the early transmission of the text.[19] Each of the copyists has his own way of indicating this, but all rely on the same repertory: a cluster of oblong dots arranged in (a) column(s).

Although repeating four to six times the same movement of the hand in order to indicate the end of a verse was apparently done without problem by all the copyists, they were more reluctant when it came to adding diacritical dots to the *rasm* in order to distinguish homographs. The use of these dots was perfectly known as the manuscript contains a fair amount of them, but the gap between the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* and a modern edition is revealing: the comparison between a page of the Cairo edition with 9: 114–119 and the corresponding place on f. 44a of the Parisian part of the manuscript shows that instead of 129 dots present today we only find five.

In addition to the scarcity of these dots, there exists a discrepancy between the various copyists regarding the use of diacritics.[20] Hand E never uses

15 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), pp. 34–36.

16 Ibid., p. 30.

17 Ibid., pp. 39–41.

18 Ibid., pp. 41–43.

19 Th. Nöldeke, *Geschichte des Qorâns*, Göttingen, 1860, p. 323.

20 See comparative table in F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), p. 44.

diacritics in the two pages he transcribed. Hand C does not fare much better: on the sixteen folios he wrote, he only marked dots in five instances. As a whole, the *jīm* and *qāf* are never identified. Hands A and B are more frequently dotting the letters than the other contributors, but the former never writes diacritics below the line (for *bā'* and *yā'*) and the latter never differentiates the *khā'*, *ḍād*, *ẓā'* and *ghayn*, although he marks more often than A the two and three dots for *tā'* and *thā'*. One could expect, according to what sources like al-Dānī say about the early use of diacritics, that *tā'* and *yā'* at the beginning of a verbal form were singled out by the copyists in order to give more clarity to the text. Such is not the case and these two consonants are rarely dotted. Hands A and C actually never differentiate *yā'*. Another point should also be stressed: in many instances, the use of diacritics by Hand A is somehow concentrated: the number of dots found in line 9 of the Parisian folio 2b or in line 16 of the Saint Petersburg folio 1b is far larger than in the rest of the folio. The short vowels and the notations of *hamza*, *tashdīd* etc. are utterly absent.

In his study of the early Qur'anic manuscripts of the Asselin de Cherville collection, Michele Amari already noted that, in addition to the use of this very specific script, the *ḥijāzī*, the early handwritten transmission was typified by its orthography, which amounted, in his words, to "a merciless war against the *alif*".[21] Régis Blachère spoke later of *scriptio defectiva*.[22] This definition can remain in use if understood properly. The Arabic script is in itself defective as it does not note the short vowels. In the case of the *scriptio defectiva* found in early Qur'anic copies, the script fails to write correctly the /*ā*/ and is somewhat inconsistent in the way in which it writes /*ī*/ and in its use of diacritical marks—in addition to the lack of short vowels.

The Qur'anic orthography is one of the elements that have to be taken into account when studying the written transmission of the text during the Umayyad period. Amari had already noticed a number of situations in which there was a discrepancy with the modern use.[23] A few problems remained to be solved. The first one was the "modern" point of comparison: Amari had been working with Hinckelmann's edition of the text, and I decided to rely for this work on the Cairo edition. It is not a scientific edition and we know

21 M. Amari, Bibliographie primitive du Coran … Extrait de son mémoire inédit sur la chronologie et l'ancienne bibliographie du Coran, publié et annoté par Hartwig Derenbourg, in *Centenario della nascita di Michele Amari* I, Palermo, 1910, p. 20.

22 R. Blachère, *Introduction au Coran*, 2e éd., Paris, 1959, especially p. 79 and following.

23 M. Amari, op. cit., pp. 19–20.

that it is with regards to some points quite inconsistent. But it is widely used and has become a common reference. On the other hand, a first survey gave me the impression that the five copyists did not completely agree in their way of writing some words. In order to be able to compare their positions in the matter of Qur'anic orthography, I thought it would be better to rely on a set of criteria which would normally be present in most of the contributions and might be later extended to most of the fragments in *ḥijāzī* style which have been preserved. Five words seemed to offer a good basis for this comparison:[24] three of them, namely *ʿibād*, *ʿadhāb* and the verb *qāla* (in *qāla*, *qālat* and *qālū*), show how the long vowel /*ā*/ is handled. The other two are also typical of the early written tradition, but in contrast with the former ones where typically an *alif* is lacking, in words like *āyāt* (when introduced by a preposition like *bi-*) or *shay*ʾ there may be an additional element which disappeared later. As we have seen, the use of diacritical marks is more difficult to analyse: the evidence of the manuscripts shows that in some instances a copyist will use more dots than in other places, without any obvious reason.

The first word on the list, *ʿibād*, is usually written without *alif*, thus looking like the singular *ʿabd*, except in a few places where Hand A has indicated the long vowel.[25] The situation is somewhat different in the case of *ʿadhāb*. Hand A contrasts with Hand C, the former using systematically the *scriptio defectiva* without *alif* whereas the latter employs the *scriptio plena* unless he has to write *ʿadhāb*^{an}—which he writes defectively. Hand B seems to follow the same pattern and Hand E only writes the word once, in the *scriptio plena*.[26] The root *QWL* is far more commonly found in the Qur'anic text and the variations concern the third person singular (*qāla* and *qālat*) and plural (*qālu*).[27] *Qāla* is predominantly written in the defective way, with Hand B and E standing apart, the former with three instances of *scriptio plena* of *qāla* and the latter with two. As for *qālu*, the only exception is in the contribution of Hand B. Surprisingly, the less frequent *qālat* is written with the *alif* thrice by Hand A, the other twenty-one instances being all in the *scriptio defectiva*.

The plural *āyāt* exhibits a peculiarity when it is preceded by a prefix like *bi-*, as in *bi-āyātinā*.[28] In contrast with the plural *āyāt* which is written *alif*, then a denticle for *yā*ʾ and the final *tā*ʾ, an extra denticle is consistently added by

24 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), pp. 54–56.
25 Ibid., p. 55.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid., pp. 55–56.
28 Ibid., p. 54.

the three copyists who had to transcribe the word, Hands A, B and C (the other two, Hands D and E did not encounter it in the short portion of text they were entrusted with), with three exceptions due to Hands A and B. Conversely, there is a case where the word is written with three denticles without being preceded by a prefix. The extra letter, in the shape of a *yāʾ* (although the copyists do not dot it as such), indicates a long vowel. This specific way of noting an /*ā*/ may be due to the presence of *bi-* that engendered a phenomenon of vowel harmony -*imāla* of the /*ā*/. When it is not in the indeterminate direct case (*shayʾ*^{an}), *shayʾ* is written with an *alif* between the *shīn* and the *yāʾ* by Hands A, D and E.[29] Hand C uses the canonical orthography[30] and B hesitates between the two, writing the word like Hand A in six occasions and twice like Hand C.

It turns out that the copyists do not share the same stand about the orthography. As can be seen from the preceding remarks, the individual positions are rather coherent. They are not the consequence of variations found on the exemplar since this would entail that the changes of hands were adjusted on its orthographic variations: the copyists would have had to detect the variations and adapt their script in a such careful way that the end of each contribution would contain no trace of compression or expansion of the script in order to adapt to the space left on the page before giving way to the next copyist. Hands A and C, the two main contributors to the transcription of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, disagree on the orthography of *shayʾ* and *ʿadhāb*, the latter opting for the *scriptio plena* (in this case considering under this heading the canonical orthography of *shayʾ*). Hand B appears somewhat hesitant between A and C, although he can be said to be closer to the former than to the latter. As for the last two copyists, their share of work is too limited to be able to draw a final conclusion. Hand E, however, also seems unsure about the correct orthography, using both *scriptio defectiva* and *scriptio plena* in his contribution. In any case, the hesitancy which can be detected in the portions of text transcribed by Hands A, B and E points to the fact that the orthography was to some extent a matter of individual—and autonomous—decision.

The defective way in which the long /*ā*/ is written is certainly the most obvious feature of the manuscript. In some cases—as is the case with *bi-āyāt*—, the

29 Ibid., pp. 54–55.

30 This orthography appears on the mosaic inscription of the Dome of the Rock, thus dated 72/691 (see C. Kessler, Abd al-Malik's inscription in the Dome of the Rock: a reconsideration, *JRAS* 1970, n. 21; O. Grabar, *The shape of the Holy, Early Islamic Jerusalem*, New York, 1996, fig. 42).

handwritten tradition provides some information about the oral transmission. The most striking example of the use of a denticle which has probably to be understood as a *yāʾ* is that of *ilāh* written *alif*/*lām*/denticle/*hāʾ* in 7: 158 which is graphically identical with *ilayhi*.[31] Conversely, the personal name *Ibrāhīm* is most of the time written without a denticle between *hāʾ* and *mīm*, as is usually the case in the canonical version—except in sura 2. Since the /*ī*/ is consistently rendered in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, it may point to a *scriptio defectiva* of /*ā*/, hence to a situation similar to that of *ilāh*. Very puzzling is the treatment of words like *Qurʾān* or *jabbār*: the *alif* is no longer written when the word is in the indefinite form of the direct case (*Qurʾ*[*ā*]*n*^{an} or *jabb*[*ā*]*r*^{an}).[32] As for the pair *Qurʾān*—*Qurʾ*[*ā*]*n*^{an}, one may wonder whether the *alif* indicates the presence of an /*ā*/ or of a *hamza*—hence possibly coinciding with a spoken version of that time.

The *alif* has actually other functions in the script than that of *mater lectionis*. As *alif al-wiqāya*, it is part of the ending of the third person plural in the past tense. In the manuscript however, verbs with a defective root like *raʾa* or *naha* are written in this case without the *alif* after the *wāw*.[33] However, Hand A and C write the ending of the second and third persons of the jussive plural of *raʾa* with an *alif al-wiqāya*, but Hand B hesitates and writes this verbal form sometimes without it. In 7: 146 and 148, he actually transcribed it four times from the original, without the *alif al-wiqāya*. He then encountered in 7: 149 the past tense *raʾū* which he wrote as it appears everywhere in the manuscript, without the final *alif*. He must have then realised that he had missed a step in his work and corrected the jussive he had written, adding the smaller *alif* in the same ink and almost the same ductus.[34] One should finally note the specific way in which *dhū* is usually written: *dhāl*/*wāw*/*alif*![35]

The *alif* is also used to indicate the *hamza*, although on this point again the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* exhibits some peculiarities.[36] Tradition tells us that at the beginning of the seventh century there were some variations within Arabia on this issue and that in Mecca it was no longer in use. The script has no sign to note it, but a study of the *rasm* shows that the copyists were sometimes trying to indicate its presence in a word. For this reason, a variety of situations

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31 Ibid., p. 60.
32 Ibid., p. 31 and 70.
33 Ibid., p. 65.
34 Ibid.
35 Ibid., pp. 65–66.
36 Ibid., pp. 66–71.

occur in the manuscript. When the *hamza* is marked by a *wāw* or a *yāʾ*, there are very few discrepancies between the manuscript and the Cairo edition whereas the use of the *alif* is subject to many variations. When a *hamza* occurs after an /*ā*/ and its vowel is a *damma* or a *kasra* as in *abāʾuna*, the copyists tried to indicate it with a *wāw* or a *yāʾ*, but the /*ā*/ does not appear in the *rasm*. However, in some cases the copyists seem to have favoured the notation of /*ā*/: Hand A writes *jazaʾ* with a final *wāw* when the word is in the subject case, as in 5: 29 and 33, but leaves it aside when the word is suffixed in 3: 87 or 4: 93.[37] When the *hamza* is associated with a *sukūn*, the copyists usually failed in indicating its presence in the text. As a final note in this recapitulation of the treatment of the *hamza*, it should be noted that in a very few cases an *alif* is used as a support instead of a *wāw* (24: 22) or a *yāʾ* (12: 100) in the Cairo edition.[38]

A verb like *qāla*, mostly written in *scriptio defectiva*, contrasts with *kāna* which only appears in *scriptio plena*, with a possibly unique exception in 6: 88. Here, in the portion transcribed by Hand E, a crude correction has changed *k*(*ā*)*nū* by addition of an *alif* into the *scriptio plena*. This is the only case in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* where the copyist used what is known to us as the early orthography of the verb.[39] This case may provide us with an indication about the model from which the manuscript was transcribed, that is to say an original in a more defective orthography. On the other hand, there seems to be a custom in writing defectively in the indefinite form of the direct case, words like *shayʾ* or *Qurʾan*. Should we speak of rules? Two forms, *faʿʿāl* and *fuʿlān*, which are sufficiently common as to provide material for a study in this direction, show a contrasting situation: in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, *fuʿlān* is treated quite coherently in spite of the change of copyists, whereas the *faʿʿāl* words exhibit hesitations between the *scriptio plena* and *defectiva*—as is the case with the word *qahhār*, written defectively in 14: 48, but in *scriptio plena* in 13: 16 and 39: 4 for instance.[40]

The study of the orthography underlines the highly personal approach of the text by the five copyists. A comparison with the Cairo edition allows us to pinpoint the divergences and to suggest an explanation based on the assumption that the written transmission did not undergo major textual changes. It leads to the conclusion that many problems, for instance that of the *hamza*, had not

37 Ibid., p. 68.

38 Ibid., p. 69.

39 Ibid., p. 71 and n. 59.

40 Ibid., pp. 71–74.

been resolved yet and that the relationship of the copyists with the original was not one of subservience, but that they were enhancing the *rasm* according to their own views while transcribing it. As it cannot be concluded from the manuscript that the changes of hand were dictated either by orthographic discrepancies or by changes of hands in the original, we are led to surmise that the scribes were upgrading the orthography while copying the text. There were however some habits—the term “rules” would be unwarranted—which were common to the group. It is all the more surprising that, given the effort made in making the *rasm* more intelligible, the copyists did not use the diacritical marks—a graphic tool they knew—in a more coherent way, which would have greatly helped the reader in deciphering the text.

One of the striking features of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* is the attention paid by the five copyists to the indication of verse endings—with the relative exception of Hand C who sometimes forgot to mark these divisions. In sharp contrast to the diacritical marks which they sparingly used in order to distinguish homographs, four to six dashes grouped in two columns are carefully repeated in order to separate the verses. These devices are different from those which are found in contemporary documents and take the shape of circles which are quicker to draw than the clusters of dashes favoured by the copyists of Qurʾan manuscripts which stayed however in use for some time.[41]

The verse division itself needs to be more closely analysed. The comparison with the canonical position of the various reading schools as summarised by Anton Spitaler substantiates the specificity of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* within the Qurʾanic tradition.[42] A first point has to do with the *basmala* which the latter does not consider as a verse—except in the *Fātiḥa*. Two of the copyists, C and D, agree with the tradition, but Hand A indicated in a systematic way a verse ending after the *basmala*. This first observation points in the same direction as the orthography: the various copyists acted independently of each other and did not share a common stance about the text.

Looking at the other points of the text, one notes that the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* sometimes indicates a verse ending in a place which is not recognised as such by the tradition. This happens for instance in sura 4 where a division was indicated after *sabīl^an^* within verse 34 and after *rasūl^an^* within

41 See for instance A. Grohmann, *From the world of Arabic papyri*, Cairo, 1952, pp. 91–93.

42 A. Spitaler, *Die Verszählung des Koran nach islamischer Überlieferung*, Munich, 1935 [Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-historische Abteilung. Jahrgang 1935, Heft 11].

verse 79.[43] In both cases, a later hand scrapped away the mark. Conversely, it does not always consider the same points of the text as verse endings as are otherwise unanimously known as such. For example, in the same sura, no verse ending is found at 4: 71.[44] Such cases may already be an indication that the manuscript is at variance with the canonical tradition. I shall return to this point later.

Turning now to the five to eight *qirāʾāt* systems recorded by Spitaler, I shall study the position of the manuscript in comparison with these various schools in order to identify the school which is followed in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*.[45] In principle, the latter should be in complete accordance with one of them, a situation which can be verified by looking at the places where the schools are at a variance, since they disagree on some verse endings as well as, consequently, on the number of verses in the Qurʾan.

In the manuscript, ninety-three cases about which some schools have a specific stance are present. Only thirty-eight of those are common with the Kufan school, which clearly excludes any relationship between its reading and that of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*. Conversely, the latter mostly agrees with the Homs reading, in seventy-five cases of the disputed verse endings.[46] It is therefore possible to state that it is verging towards this specific school, although it cannot be said to reflect its position as a whole. In many instances, a verse ending which is only known in the Homs tradition is indicated in the manuscript. For example, the latter indicates within 9: 36 after *al-dīn al-qayyim* the end of a verse which is only known by this school.[47] On the other hand, there are cases where a typically Himsi verse division is not present in the manuscript. In 28: 38, for instance, the Himsi school considers that there is a verse ending after *ʿalā al-ṭīn*, but there is no mark at that place in the manuscript.[48] Conversely, a division at 24: 44, common to all the schools except that of Homs, was marked by Hand A.[49]

The beginning of sura 3 deserves attention.[50] The copyist disagrees with the Kufan school, which has a division after *alif-lām-mīm* (its verse 1) but not after

43 Paris, BnF, Arabe 328, f. 12b and 15a. Also F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), p. 83.

44 Paris, BnF, Arabe 328, f. 14b.

45 Ideally, it would be more coherent to analyse the verse division according to each copyist, but the amount of text transcribed by Hand B, D and E was not sufficient for such a study.

46 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), pp. 92–93.

47 Saint Petersburg, NLR, Marcel 18, f. 5b.

48 Ibid., f. 23a.

49 Ibid., f. 11b.

50 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), p. 137.

al-furqān, but follows on both points the other schools. He disagrees with all the schools since he considers the *basmala* as a verse, but does not stop after *al-qayyūm* (verse 2 in the Kufan tradition), nor after *fī al-samāʾ* (verse 5). He then agrees with the Syrian tradition (Damascus and Homs) in disregarding the division at 3: 3. The next verse about which there is a general agreement is verse 6: it has the same number in other schools, but not in the Syrian tradition which sees it as verse 5. As for the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, it is its verse 4—counting the *basmala* as a verse.

To sum up, the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* does not indicate a verse ending in twelve places which Spitaler's tables record as unanimously considered as such by the tradition.[51] Conversely, it indicates within seven verses a division which is not recorded by the tradition.[52] The verse ending within 5: 3 after *bi-l-azlām* stands alone within this group as it defines a rather long textual sequence whereas the other ones are quite short. It coincides with a change of meaning which has been recognised by Friedrich Schwally and Richard Bell and the verse thus divided—which is seen by some authorities as the last revealed verse—would receive a specific identity.[53]

The six other divisions specific to the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* share a common feature: the portion of text comprised between them and the next verse ending is a short textual unit which in all cases except 25: 4 can be defined as a very general enunciation ending with a word rhyming with the neighbouring verses. In 4: 79, *shahīd^{an}* rhymes with *fatīl^{an}*, *ḥadīth^{an}*, *ḥafīẓ^{an}* and *wakīl^{an}*, a sequence interrupted in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* by the verse ending *rasūl^{an}* which is only recorded in this copy.[54] In 9: 115, *ʿalīm* echoes the endings in *-īm* and *-īr*, but *yattaqūn*, which corresponds to the division found in the manuscript, disrupts the sequence.[55] The *-ār* sequence of rhymes at the beginning of sura 14 is interrupted by the word *al-ẓālamīn* which the manuscript considers as the last word of a verse.[56] The only partial exception to this is the short segment within 25: 4 which reads: "So they [= the

51 Ibid., pp. 93–94.

52 Ibid., p. 93.

53 Ibid., p. 141. See F. Schwally, *Geschichte des Qorâns*, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1909, vol. I, p. 227; R. Bell, *The Qur'ân. Translated, with a critical re-arrangement of the Surahs by* Richard Bell, t. I, Edinburgh, 1937, pp. 93–94.

54 F. Déroche, op. cit., p. 138. Further examination of the copies in *ḥijāzī* style may unearth other examples of a division at this specific place or at the points analysed here.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.

misbelievers] have committed wrong and falsehood";[57] as it appears today in the Qurʾanic text, it is inserted between two elements conveying the words of the misbelievers, "The unbelievers say: This is naught but a calumny he has forged, and other folk have helped him to it" (beginning of 25: 4) and "And they say: Fairy tales of the ancients that he has had written down, so that they are recited to him at dawn and in the evening" (25: 5).[58] In this case, the short segment of 25: 4 which appears as a verse in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* provides a rhyme to 25: 3 (*nushūr^{an}* and *wazūr^{an}*) and more generally to the beginning of the sura (*-iC^{an}*) which is not the case of *ʿakharūn*, the verse ending specific to the manuscript within 25: 4. It is also a strong rebuttal of the accusations levelled against Muhammad by his enemies.

How should we understand this peculiarity of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*? I suggest that the "short verses" are the trace of an editing of the text which took place when the revelations were put together in larger portions of text. In these cases, a verse which was not rhyming with the surrounding verses was complemented by a short sentence which solved the problem of the rhyme. The hypothesis of such an editorial work was first formulated by Schwally,[59] then by Bell.[60] The tradition preserved an account which to some extent is similar to what has been found here: a scribe of the revelation was said to have uttered an exclamation as Muhammad was completing the dictation of a verse; and the prophet would have taken over the words and had them added to the text.[61] The scribes in charge of the final transcription of the revelations may have unintentionally left some marks of this editorial work which survived during a short period of time until the canonisation process was over.

According to Muslim tradition, the caliph ʿUthmān had some copies of the text transcribed once the recension he had ordered was completed.[62] He sent

57 Ibid., pp. 140–141.

58 Translation by Arthur A. Arberry (*The Koran interpreted*, New York, 1955, vol. 2, p. 56).

59 F. Schwally, op. cit., p. 41.

60 W.M. Watt and R. Bell, *Introduction to the Qurʾan*, Edinburgh, 1977, pp. 90–93 (especially pp. 92–93). See also A.T. Welch, s.v. "Ḳurʾān", *EI*^{2}, vol. 5, p. 422.

61 See F. Schwally, op. cit., pp. 46–47.

62 See al-Dānī, *K. al-Muqniʿ fī maʿrifa marsūm maṣāḥif ahl al-amṣār*, ed. M.A. Dahmān, s.d., p. 9, l. 8–11 (ed. Pretzl, Istanbul, 1932, p. 10), who mentions four copies; he then goes on with another account mentioning seven copies (ibid., l. 11–13). Al-Dānī obviously supports the first version. The question of the stemma which would explain these differences had been addressed by T. Nöldeke (op. cit., p. 242), then by G. Bergsträsser and O. Pretzl (*Geschichte*

them to the main cities of his empire. But they were not completely identical and contained a few peculiarities. In his study of the Parisian part of he *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, Yasin Dutton demonstrated that the variants found in the manuscript were those of the copy which, according to the tradition, was sent to Damascus.[63] It follows the Syrian reading of Ibn ʿĀmir. At 3: 184, for instance, it reads *bi-z-zubur* instead of *az-zubur* in all the other readings. The portion of the manuscript kept in Saint Petersburg does not alter this picture: among the variants which are recorded for this part of the text, only one in 57: 10 is specific to Ibn ʿAmir's reading.[64] Dutton's conclusions are thus confirmed.

In addition to these canonical variants, the copy contains small variants which I shall briefly analyse. Some cases are clearly the result of a scribal mistake, some of which were actually corrected by the copyists themselves.[65] The upper part of the f. 18b in the Parisian part of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* has been carefully erased by the same copyist who probably realised that what he had transcribed was faulty and the correct version was written over.[66] In the portion of the Qur'an which was transcribed by Hand C, there seems to be a higher frequency of scribal mistakes.[67] Other situations are not so easy to characterise: in 3: 189 for instance, the original text can be read as *wa-Allāh malik as-samawāt wa-l-arḍ* which was later corrected into the canonical *wa-li-Llāh mulk as-samawāt* by erasure of the *alif*.[68] In many places, as in the former example, the erasure did not eliminate completely the original text and it is possible to decipher it, but in other cases it has been quite effective.

Once the obvious scribal mistakes like the dittographies in 42: 14 and 24 have been eliminated,[69] there remain about ten cases which cannot be satisfactorily explained as a peculiarity of the early Qur'anic orthography or as an error. In the majority of the cases, the variants consist of an additional coordinating

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des Qorâns, 2nd ed., vol. III, Leipzig, 1938, p. 15). For a recent approach, see M. Cook, The stemma of the regional codices of the Koran, in *Graeco-arabica. Festschrift in honour of V. Christides*, G.K. Livadas ed., vol. 9–10, Athens, 2004, pp. 89–104.

63 Y. Dutton, An early *muṣḥaf* according to the reading of Ibn ʿĀmir, *Journal of Qur'anic studies* 3 (2001), pp. 71–74.

64 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), pp. 104–105.

65 Ibid., pp. 45–46.

66 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), p. 105.

67 Ibid., pp. 45–46 and 107.

68 Ibid., p. 105 (Paris, BnF, Arabe 328, f. 9a).

69 Ibid., p. 106.

conjunction, as in 5: 12 or 7: 14 for instance.[70] In all these cases, the erasure of the supplementary element ensured the conformity of the manuscript with the canonical *rasm*. Conversely, in 10: 37, a missing *wāw* has been added at the beginning of the verse.[71] The original *wa-lahā* in 4: 12 has been changed into *wa-lahu*, the only element which can still be deciphered in a verse which has been carefully emended.[72] Other variants were not corrected. In 11: 31, the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* reads *li-lladhī* instead of *li-lladhīna* and *yā-laytanī* instead of *laytanī* in 25: 28.[73]

Non-canonical variants similar to those found in the manuscript are also observed in contemporary fragments or manuscripts—according to their script. In all of them, the text conforms basically to the ʿUthmanic *rasm*, with canonical variants as well as others corresponding to the same typology as those of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* I previously mentioned. An analysis of the situation of the variants during the second/eighth and early third/ninth centuries shows that the compilation and canonisation of their lists is comparatively late and probably based on later copies. The text found in the early copies may therefore reflect a state of the Qur'an's transmission predating the work of the scholars of the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries and may still have been somewhat fluid.[74] The same holds for the division into verses, which had not yet undergone the systematisation corresponding to the canonical lists concerning the number of verses, the earliest of which are dated to the end of the second/eighth century. It also applies to the *basmala* considered a verse by some of the copyists—such as A.

The scribal mistakes, like one at the beginning of 3: 129, but also the possible variant at the beginning of 3: 189,[75] both initially with *Allāh* instead of the canonical *li-Llāh*, provide us with a precious hint about the circumstances under which the copyists worked. The clear difference between *Allāh* and *li-Llāh* excludes that they may have been transcribing the text by memory or by dictation, since such a confusion would not be possible. Another indication in that direction are the instances in the text, like 6: 88, 7: 146 and 7: 148, where

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70 Ibid., pp. 106–107.

71 Ibid., p. 107.

72 Ibid. See also D. Powers, *Muhammad is not the father of any of your men. The making of the last prophet*, Philadelphia, 2009, ch. 8 (pp. 155–196) about 4: 12 in Arabe 328.

73 Ibid.

74 I. Rabb aptly introduced the concept of "fluidity" in her paper about London, BL Or. 2165 (Non-Canonical Readings of the Qur'ān: Recognition and Authenticity (The Ḥimsī Reading), *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2006, p. 108).

75 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), p. 152.

the orthography was upgraded by the copyists.[76] The last two instances are especially telling as the addition of the four *alif al-wiqāya* by Hand B cannot be due to a repeated omission of that letter but rather to a faithful transcription of the defective original by a copyist momentarily oblivious of his task and correcting himself once he had discovered his mistake. All these instances point in the same direction: the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* was transcribed from an older exemplar written in a more defective orthography that the five scribes were trying to improve while they were copying.

The *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* was certainly quickly superseded by copies which were more accurate as far as the orthography, the use of diacritics or of vocalisation are concerned, and more pleasing to the eye both in terms of the quality of the script and the presence of illuminations. However, the manuscript contains many indications that it remained in use for a comparatively long period of time. This appears first when one looks at the division into verses and groups of verses.[77] Some of the original marks were eliminated: it is no wonder that the seven non-canonical verse endings were erased, but such was also the fate of other divisions which were either common to all the schools, like 3: 122 and 8: 62,[78] or proper to some of them—for instance 4: 44 or 14: 24.[79] Conversely, some of the canonical verse endings which were absent in the manuscript were added by later hands, at 3: 2 and 5 or 23: 112 for example.[80]

Indications of groups of five and ten verses were also introduced at some moment.[81] The former were signalled by the addition of a red *alif* surrounded by dots in the same colour. The latter were highlighted by a red circle drawn after erasing the original verse ending. Both were probably the work of the same person who apparently did not complete his work as he stopped at f. 64b of the Parisian portion of the manuscript. These marks were later enhanced by the addition of alphabetic numerals (*abjad*); but in some cases, the red circles have been erased and the tenth indication has been written in another place. The previous indications at 14: 30 and 40 have for instance been superseded by those with a *lām* (value: 30) at 14: 28 and with a *mīm* (value: 40) at 14: 38.[82]

76 Ibid., p. 153.
77 Ibid., pp. 94–101.
78 Ibid., p. 80.
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid., p. 94.
81 Ibid., pp. 94–95.
82 Ibid., p. 95.

In this case, the work has been carried out until the end of what has been preserved. On palaeographical grounds, it is possible to date this numeration prior to the fourth/tenth century, probably to the third/ninth century. This date is also suggested by the fact that it does not agree with the canonical systems which were introduced by the turn of the century.

The analysis of these additions shows that the marks of ten do not always agree with the original verse endings as far as the total number of verses in a sura is concerned. When the observation is possible, it becomes clear for instance that the person who added the *abjad* marks did not consider the *basmala* as a verse.[83] In other places of the text, the situation looks more complicated since in some cases he took into account the original division but in others he did not, although he paid no attention to the verses that were not canonical.[84]

The text itself was also modified by later readers. The erasures which we see today may have been made by the copyists themselves, but also by later users. When no correction has been added afterwards, it is difficult to decide who was responsible for it.[85] In other cases, the answer is more obvious, as is the case in the last line of f. 30b of the Parisian part of the manuscript.[86] The script belongs to one of the later styles in use in Abbasid times, close to the B group—according to the palaeographical typology I have put forward.[87] It could be dated to the third/ninth century. Another hand seems slightly later: he modified the text in various places, using a black ink quite different from that of the previous correction. The style can be defined as NS, thus pointing to a date at the end of the third/ninth or beginning of the fourth/tenth century.[88] Most of the time, this corrector contented himself with rewriting faithfully the original text, probably in order to make it more legible. To these two stages of correction has to be added the somewhat crude attempts at re-inking the faded letters especially on the hair sides of the parchment, trying to follow the original characters.[89] They are unfortunately very difficult to date.

All these various later interventions suggest that the community where the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* was kept viewed it as sufficiently important as to

83 Ibid., p. 97.
84 Ibid., p. 98.
85 Ibid., pp. 45–46.
86 Ibid., pp. 46–47.
87 F. Déroche, op. cit. (1983), pp. 37–39 and pl. IX–XI; id. (1992), op. cit., pp. 38–39.
88 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), p. 47.
89 Ibid.

justify changes which were aimed on the one hand at keeping it legible and on the other at adjusting its presentation of the text in order to bring it closer to the canonical version and to more recent standards.

When and where was the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* transcribed? As we have seen, the text of the *Fihrist* suggests that the *ḥijāzī* style was among the earliest varieties of Arabic script. On the other hand, being a copy of an earlier codex, it can hardly be dated before the middle of the first/seventh century, the more so because the copyists are adjusting the orthography in order to note more precisely the Qur'anic text. The highly idiosyncratic way in which the five copyists worked suggests on the other hand that the reforms of ʿAbd al-Malik (who reigned from 65/685 to 86/705) had not yet been enforced. It should however be noted that Hand D writes in a very regular way, almost professional. If we accept the information provided by the Muslim tradition about the intervention of the Umayyad governor of Kufa, the famous al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf and what Omar Hamdan called the "*Maṣāḥif* project",[90] we have to note that some of its features lack entirely in the manuscript. The manuscript could therefore be attributed to the third quarter of the first century AH, between 671 and 695 AD.[91] It would thus be one of the earliest witnesses of book production in Umayyad times.

The place of copy of the manuscript eludes us. On the basis of the canonical variants present in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, Dutton suggested Syria as the possible origin of this copy.[92] However, the lack of information about the diffusion of the readings at an early date calls for caution. The place where it was kept until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the ʿAmr mosque in Fustat, leaves open the possibility that it was transcribed there. But it may also have been brought in from another place, as other manuscripts found in this trove.

Western scholars have described the text of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* as Qur'anic and this was already the opinion of the corrector who, by

90 O. Hamdan, *Studien zur Kanonisierung des Korantextes. Al-Hasan al-Basris Beiträge zur Geschichte des Korans*, Wiesbaden, 2006, pp. 135–174.

91 M. Tillier suggested to identify the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* with the *muṣḥaf* of Asmā' (review of F. Déroche, *La transmission écrite du Coran dans les débuts de l'islam. Le codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, [Texts and studies on the Qur'ān 5] Leiden-Boston, 2009, *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 2011, pp. 112–114). The script and the lack of features described as part of the "*Maṣāḥif* project" of al-Ḥajjāj (see O. Hamdan, op. cit., pp. 135–174) are two strong arguments against this identification.

92 Y. Dutton, op. cit., p. 83.

the end of the ninth century wrote the name of the suras in red. But does it fit the traditional history of the writing down of the Qur'an? According to these accounts, the Muslim commander of the troops during a campaign in Armenia (around 650) heard that his soldiers were reciting the Qur'an in very different ways.[93] Shocked, he came to report to the caliph ʿUthmān (who reigned from 644 to 656) and begged him to take steps in order to avoid that Muslims would experience the same situation as Jews and Christians who were quarrelling over their scriptures. ʿUthmān then ordered to make a recension which would prevent that. When looking at the transcription of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, one sees that this copy as well as all those which belong to these chronological strata of the transmission are unable to prevent what the ʿUthmanic edition was supposed to achieve. With very few diacritics, no short vowels or orthoepic marks, it simply could not have provided the solution which the caliph is said to have been seeking according to the Muslim tradition. In addition, the small non-canonical variants and the peculiarities of the division of the text into verses suggest that at the time when the manuscript was transcribed, the *rasm* was not yet fully fixed, although the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* is in itself proof that the part of the canonical text corresponding to the contents of the manuscript was there—more precisely: is compatible with them. Is the manuscript unique of its kind? A more general appraisal of the transmission of the Qur'anic text in copies in *ḥijāzī* style will help us answer this question.

93 Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ed. ʿA.ʿA. B. Baz, Beirut, 1994, vol. I, p. 66.

CHAPTER 2

The Written Transmission of the Qurʾan in *Ḥijāzī* Script. A General Appraisal

The *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, with its complex history, gave us a first insight into the early history of the written transmission of the Qurʾan. The text is still somewhat fluid in its orthography and in the way in which the verses are divided since, in both cases, the personal viewpoint of the various copyists has some bearing on its presentation. Although the manuscript provides us with a wide-ranging set of situations, one may wonder whether this specific copy is a good example of the contemporary practices in the transcription of the Revelation.

On a more important level, that of canonicity, the text found in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, in spite of some peculiarities in the division into verses or in the text itself, is consistent with the ʿUthmanic *rasm* since we can surmise for the moment that the differences in orthography and the lack of diacritical marks do not impair the possibility to read it according to the canon. On the basis of the observations made previously on this copy, I would like to explore a sample of manuscripts featuring the same variety of script, *ḥijāzī*,—which is for the moment the firmest basis in the identification of earliest copies—and try to determine if in spite of the idiosyncratic character of the contributions in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* there was something amounting to a "tradition" which was imposing some form of control over the copyists' apparent freedom.

The sixteen folios of the first fragment (ŞE 118; fig. 7) which I shall examine are now in Istanbul, in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum. Until the end of the nineteenth century, they were kept in the geniza-like depot of the Great mosque in Damascus among old manuscript fragments, mainly Qurʾanic.[1] Before the fall of the Ottoman Empire, in 1911, the majority of what was kept there was brought to Istanbul in order to be preserved in the new Evkaf museum,

1 F. Déroche, La bibliothèque de la mosquée des Omeyyades. Les documents qui accompagnent les manuscrits, in *Ecrire l'histoire de Damas. Nouvelles données archéologiques et nouvelles sources sur une métropole arabe à l'époque médiévale*, J.M. Mouton ed. (forthcoming).

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which was later renamed Türk ve Islam eserleri müzesi (TIEM).[2] Its parchment folios measure 31 × 24 cm and the written surface covers from 28 to 29 × 21 cm, with 21 to 26 lines to the page. The verses are separated by groups of six dashes in two vertical columns of three or of nine dashes in three vertical columns of three. Between the suras, a space has been left empty. The *basmala* is counted as a verse—although the verse divider found after the *basmala* of sura 23 is different from the usual shape.

The stroke is similar to that of Hands C or D in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*. The copyist writes neatly, keeping some space between the upper extremities of the vertical strokes and the line above. In the fragment, the *alif* is bending to the right and its lower extremity has the shape of a tiny hook. The final or isolated *kāf* is recognisable by its lower horizontal stroke elongated beyond the point where the upper stroke of the letter turns upwards at an almost right angle.[3] The final *mīm* is almost round; only a small protuberance is left as a reminder of the tail. The sickle-shaped *nūn* is not unlike that of Hand C. As was the case in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, the transcription complies with the rules of the *scriptio continua* adapted to the Arabic script and the text is spread out on the page in a rather regular manner.

The text examined on this fragment is a rather short one. It should be noted that the orthography seems rather conservative: *qāla* is always written in *scriptio defectiva*, whereas *shay'* and *bi-āyāt* are respectively written with the *alif* between *shīn* and *yā'* and with three denticles in all the occurrences found on the fragment. *'Ibād* and *'adhāb* exhibit a less clear-cut situation: in both cases, it is an almost fifty-fifty situation with a slight majority of *scriptio defectiva* (respectively four against three and six against four). With the exception of these orthographic specificities, the text does not deviate in any significant way from that of the Cairo edition.

The codex London, British Library, Or. 2165 is the most important *ḥijāzī* copy as far as the extent of text preserved is concerned (fig. 8).[4] It was found in Egypt,

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2 A.S. Demirkol and S. Kutluay, Türk ve Islam Eserleri Müzesi Kur'an-ı kerim koleksiyonu hakkında, in A.S. Demirkol et al., *1400. Yılında Kur'an-ı kerim*, Istanbul, 2010, pp. 139–140.

3 F. Déroche, Un critère de datation des écritures coraniques anciennes: le *kāf* final ou isolé, *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 11 (1999), pp. 87–94 and pl. 15–16 [*In memoriam M. Meinecke*].

4 The manuscript contains 122 folios. The text covers 7: 42–9: 95; 10: 9–39: 47; 40: 61–43: 71. A facsimile of the first half of the manuscript has been published by F. Déroche and S. Noja Noseda (*Le manuscrit Or. 2165 (f. 1 à 61) de la British Library* [Sources de la transmission manuscrite du texte coranique, I: Les manuscrits de style higâzî], Lesa, 2001). A complete edition of the text is currently prepared by Keith Small.

in the ʿAmr mosque—like the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*. Six folios were acquired at the beginning of the nineteenth century by the French Arabist and consular agent Jean-Louis Asselin de Cherville and are now in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.[5] However, the bulk of the manuscript was bought later by the English cleric and Egyptologist, Greville J. Chester, who paid various visits to Egypt; it is not known precisely how and where he got hold of the 122 folios which were later acquired by the British Museum and are now one of the best known Islamic manuscripts of the British Library. In addition, a bifolio is kept in the Kuwait Museum of Islamic Art.[6] The manuscript has been reproduced various times since William Wright's *Facsimiles of manuscripts and inscriptions* (*Oriental series*) was published between 1875 and 1883.[7] It has been widely known thanks to Josef von Karabacek as the reference manuscript for the so-called *māʾil* script, a name which he found in Gustav Flügel's edition of the *Fihrist* but was actually a copyist's emendation for *munābidh*.[8]

The size of these 130 parchment folios is quite close to that of the *ḥijāzī* copies we have seen so far. With 31,5 × 22 cm, it is a fair *quarto* volume. Twenty-one to 27, but most frequently 23 to 25 lines of script cover its pages, leaving almost no external margins, with a writing surface of 28,8 × 20 cm. In contrast to the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, there is evidence that the manuscript has been trimmed since: in some cases, the last letter of a line has been cut away when the manuscript has been rebound. As the other copies of this age, the text has been transcribed according to the rules of the *scriptio continua* adapted to the Arabic script.[9] From what remains today of this manuscript, it is possible to establish that about 16 square meters of parchment were necessary for its production, that is to say about the same quantity as what was

5 Arabe 328 e, see F. Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran: Aux origines de la calligraphie coranique* [Bibliothèque Nationale, Catalogue des manuscrits arabes, 2e partie, Manuscrits musulmans, I/1], Paris, 1983, p. 62, no 7. The six folios contain 5: 7–65 and 6: 39–112.

6 Dār al-Athar al-Islāmiyyah, The al-Sabah collection, LNS 19 CA.

7 W. Wright, *Facsimiles of manuscripts and inscriptions. Oriental series*, London, 1875–1883, pl. LIX.

8 J. von Karabacek (Julius Euting's Sinaïtische Inschriften, *WZKM* 5 [1891], p. 324) associated the script of Or. 2165 with this name found in Gustav Flügel's edition of al-Nadīm's *K. al-Fihrist* (*K. al-Fihrist*, G. Flügel ed., Leipzig, 1871, t. I, p. 6). The discrepancy with the reading of a better copy of the text, MS Chester Beatty Library 3315, used by R. Tajaddud in his edition of the text (*K. al-Fihrist*, R. Tajaddud ed., Tehran, 1350/1971, p. 9) has been noticed by G. Endress (Die arabische Schrift, *Grundriß der arabischen Philologie*, t. I, *Sprachwissenschaft*, W. Fischer ed., Wiesbaden, 1982, p. 173 et n. 66).

9 See ch. 1.

required for the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*. However, the parchment seems to have been coated with chalk, which results in a whiter and almost glossy appearance.

The verses are separated either by two vertical columns of three oblong dots or by roughly circular clusters of ten or more such dots.[10] Between the suras, a space has been left empty; the titles have been added by a later hand. The *basmala* is indicated as a verse and is written alone on the first line of the sura.

The stroke is similar to that of Hand D in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, but slightly thicker and neater than those of Hands A or B in its contours. There may have been more than one copyist involved in the copy, but as a whole the script is more homogeneous than in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*. In a recent paper, Intisar A. Rabb established that it was transcribed by two copyists and that later, four to seven hands corrected the copy.[11] The main hand, A, is responsible for the largest part of the manuscript. Hand B was a minor contributor with f. 3 v° to 8 r° penned in his hand. Interestingly enough, the copyists of Or. 2165 abided by the same rule as those of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, starting their work on a verso and finishing their contribution on a recto so that no opening should exhibit a difference of hands on its two halves. Rabb's point on the verse dividers as an indication of a change of hand is probably correct: the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* shows that the copyists tended to favour a variety of verse dividers, even if all were basically relying on the same components.

In spite of the more homogeneous appearance of the copy, some details such as the frequent contact of the upper strokes with the line above suggest that the copyists were not as careful as Hand D in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, for instance. The *alif* in the manuscript is usually a mere stroke, without a lower hook to the right; in a few instances, the copyist seems to have started a movement to the right before checking himself.[12] The final or isolated *kāf* is basically identical with the shape found in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, with its lower stroke extending largely towards the left; one should however notice that the two branches on the right part of the letter are almost parallel.[13] The final *mīm* is almost rounded—and the isolated letter even more. A very short vertical tail is sometimes found. The shape of the *nūn* looks very

10 I. Rabb, Non-Canonical Readings of the Qur'ān: Recognition and Authenticity (The Ḥimsī Reading), *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2006, p. 98.

11 Ibid., pp. 98–99.

12 See for instance London, BL, Or. 2165, f. 7a, for instance.

13 Ibid., f. 20a, l. 1, 4 or 7, for instance.

close to that favoured by Hand D of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*—with a somewhat shorter lower component.[14] When comparing the diacritical dotting in Or. 2165 with that found in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, it becomes clear that the proportion of dotted letters is significantly larger. On a small portion of text transcribed by Hand A of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* (Saint Petersburg, NLR, Marcel 18, f. 2a to 3a, 8: 42–72), thirty-two letters have been dotted against 179 in Or. 2165. However, the process is not strictly cumulative as only eighteen of the latter are also dotted on the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*.

Since the publication of the facsimile of the first half of the manuscript,[15] two papers have been devoted to the manuscript, a first one by Yasin Dutton,[16] the second one—already mentioned—by Rabb. Dutton concluded, following the examination of both the original in the British Library and the facsimile, that it was produced in Syria,

> written according to the reading of the Syrian reader Ibn ʿĀmir and showing a verse-marking pattern that most accords with the Syrian system of the Ḥimsīs.[17]

On the date of the copy, he suggested a timescale extending from 30 to 85 AH—that is to say between the "edition" of ʿUthmān and the beginning of al-Walīd I reign which corresponds to the production of the famous copy in Sanaa.[18] He added that "the latter end of this time scale [was] the safer, but not necessarily the more correct, guess."[19] Rabb's conclusions somewhat challenged Dutton's views. In addition to her remarks on the scribes, she stressed the fact that the copy was "definitively Ḥimsī in both its 'skeletal text' ... and verse-endings",[20] although she acknowledged cases of divisions which did not accord with the tradition.[21]

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14 Ibid., f. 22a, l. 1 and 7 for instance.

15 F. Déroche and S. Noja Noseda, op. cit.

16 Y. Dutton, Some notes on the British Library's "Oldest Qur'an manuscript" (Or. 2165), *Journal of Qur'anic studies* 6 (2004), pp. 43–71.

17 Ibid., p. 65.

18 Ibid., p. 66.

19 Ibid.

20 I. Rabb, op. cit., pp. 85–86. She first concludes that the manuscript "may well date back to the 1st/7th century, and definitely goes back to the early 2nd/8th century at least" (ibid., p. 98), then writes that it "goes back to the 1st/7th century" (ibid., p. 108).

21 Ibid., p. 108.

An analysis of the orthography based on the five words I selected for the evaluation of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* shows that Or. 2165 reflects a slight evolution towards the *scriptio plena*. Of course, the spelling of *qāla* is largely defective in the part of the manuscript which has been published in facsimile since in 98 percent of the cases the verb is written *qāf* and *lām*, a situation largely similar to that found in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*. On the other hand, *qālū* is comparatively more frequently written in *scriptio plena*: the copyists used it in 15 percent of the occurrences—against 85 percent for the *scriptio defectiva*. The proportion is equivalent for *ʿibād*, although the evidence is numerically more reduced. Turning now to *shayʾ*, things seem to have changed: the old spelling with the *alif* appears in only 64 percent of the cases. When it comes to *ʿadhāb*, the *scriptio plena* becomes dominant with 66 percent of the occurrences. As for the various forms of *bi-āyāt*, the *rasm* with three denticles is still dominant, with twenty-seven cases out of thirty-three (i.e. slightly more than 80 percent).

As a last example, I shall discuss the fragment Saint Petersburg, NLR Marcel 19 (fig. 9).[22] In contrast to the previous manuscripts, the number of lines to the page (20) remains stable on the fifteen folios (29 × 25 cm) which I have been able to identify.[23] The script is regular, probably the work of a professional. It recalls Hand C of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, but the *alif* bending to the right has almost no trace of a hook. The final or isolated *kāf* has the characteristic shape with the lower horizontal stroke elongated beyond the point where the upper stroke of the letter turns upwards at an almost right angle. The final *mīm* is almost round; only a small protuberance is left as a reminder of the tail. The inverted L-shaped *nūn* is not unlike that of Hand D. A ruling with a dry point is visible. The copyist wanted to leave a thin margin around the writing surface (25,3 × 22,5 cm) and prepared the transcription with a ruling, drawn with a dry point. Diacritical marks are present: the original dashes, not very numerous, have been complemented by at least two hands. The verses are regularly indicated by groups of six dashes in two columns. The groups of ten have been marked later with crude circles in black ink. The *basmala*,

22 Thirteen folios are in the National Library of Russia in Saint Petersburg, two in Paris (BNF, Arabe 328 f, f. 96–97; see F. Déroche, op. cit. [1983], p. 61, no 5). The Parisian folios of the manuscript can be accessed on the Gallica website of the BnF (gallica.bnf.fr). An edition is currently prepared by Hassan Chahdi in the frame of the French-German project *Coranica*.

23 Marcel 19, f. 1–6: 18: 29 to 19: 98; Marcel 19, f. 7-Arabe 328, f. 96: 23: 75 to 26: 51; Arabe 328, f. 97: 28: 10–32.

indicated as a verse, is written alone on the first line of the sura. Coloured ornaments separate the suras. They do not include any title and have probably been added.

The text present on the fragment contains three places where a canonical variant is known. A first one, common to the Medinan, Meccan and Damascan codices, is found at 18: 36. The other two are not very significant: the text follows the majority at 23: 85, 87 and 89—against the Basran codex—and the Kufan variants at 23: 112 and 114 involve an opposition between the homographs *qāla* and *qul*.

The orthography can be defined as *scriptio defectiva*. The various forms of *qāla* are dominantly written defectively: this is actually the case for the seventeen occurrences of *qālū*, of seventy-five instances of *qāla* (against one in *scriptio plena* at 25: 8) and six of *qālat* against one (19: 18). The same situation is found for the various occurrences of *ʿibād* (eight in *scriptio defectiva*, one in *scriptio plena*), of *shayʾ* (the ten instances are all written according to the old orthography) and of *āyāt*, written with three denticles in four cases and only once in the modern orthography. Conversely, *ʿadhāb* appears in *scriptio plena* in thirteen occurrences; the *scriptio defectiva* has been used four times—three more when the word in the indefinite direct case is taken into account.

All the manuscripts and fragments discussed here so far are volumes in quarto size.[24] Actually, the literature devoted to the *ḥijāzī* copies has mainly paid attention to these larger volumes, although scattered evidence of smaller copies has been known for some time.[25] I shall now turn to the Qur'anic manuscripts of smaller size in order to examine their peculiarities if any in comparison with the larger copies. It is tempting to surmise that the latter were meant for public use, while the smaller ones were private copies, but once again no direct evidence supports this assumption. It may actually be that there is no link between size and use, but that it is only a matter of costs—more affluent patrons being

24 It proved impossible to have access to the manuscript Istanbul, TKS M. 1 (391 f. measuring 32×24 cm) which may belong to this group (F.E. Kararay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi arapça yazmalar katalogu*, vol. 1, *Kur'an, Kur'an ilimleri, Tefsirler. No 1–2171*, Istanbul, 1962, pp. 1–2, no 3).

25 See for instance some of the fragments in the Chicago University collection (N. Abbott, *The Rise of the North Arabic script and its kur'ânic development*, Chicago, 1939, pp. 60–63, pl. VIII–XIII), or in the national libraries of Paris (Seymour de Ricci collection, see F. Déroche, op. cit., pp. 151–155, nos 281–293) and Vienna (A Perg. 2, see H. Loebenstein, *Koranfragmente auf Pergament aus der Papyrussammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek*, Wien, 1982, vol. 1, pp. 23–26, no 1 and vol. 2, pl. 1–2).

able to stand the expense of a greater amount of parchment. Information on such costs are actually available in the discussion of the lawfulness of the payment of a fee for the copy of the Qur'an, but there is no information about the format of the copy which is at the core of these accounts.[26] These are however slightly later and so are the cases of public patronage which could serve as a basis for the discussion of the public use of Qur'anic manuscripts, with the exception of the ʿUthmanic *ummahāt*.

A first example is a parchment fragment which is also part of the Damascus collection kept in the Museum of Turkish and Islamic art in Istanbul (ŞE 3687; fig. 10). It consists of ten folios measuring 24 × 16 cm, that is an octavo format. Its height (24 cm) actually corresponds to the width of the folios of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*. There are from 22 to 29 lines to the page, most commonly 23, with a written surface of 21,5 × 14,6 cm, leaving almost no margin. Extrapolating from a portion of continuous text on five folios, I estimate that the manuscript had originally ca. 255 folios, in other words that 9,8 square meters of parchment were needed for its production. It also belongs to the *scriptio continua* tradition, with words cut at the end of the line when the space left would not accommodate them conveniently. The stroke is rather regular, evoking Hand C in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*. The *alif* is bending to the right and its lower extremity has the shape of a more or less accentuated hook. There is usually a sharp contrast between the *alif* and the *lām*, the latter being often written as a vertical stroke. The final or isolated *kāf* is recognisable to its lower horizontal stroke elongated beyond the point where the upper part of the letter turns upwards at an almost right angle, although it tends to be

26 See ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *al-Muṣannaf*, ed. H. al-Aʿzami, Beirut, 1972, t. VIII, 114, nº 14530; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Kitāb al-muṣannaf*, ed. ʿA. Khān al-Afghānī et al., Hyderabad-Bombay, 1980, t. IV, 294, *Buyūʿ*, nº 20228; Ibn Abī Dā'ud, *Kitāb al-maṣāḥif* = A. Jeffery, *Materials for the history of the text of the Qur'ān*, Leiden, 1937, p. 133 Arabic. Also A. Gacek, The copying and handling of Qur'āns: Some observations on the *Kitāb al-Maṣāḥif* by Ibn Abī Dā'ud al-Sijistānī, *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 59 (2006) [Actes de la conférence internationale sur les manuscrits du Coran (Bologne, 26–28 septembre 2002)], p. 240; A. George, *The rise of Islamic calligraphy*, London, 2010, pp. 52–53 and notes 112–116. Another indication in found in Ibn Muṭarrif al-Kinānī, *al-Qurṭayn*, Beirut, n.d., p. 171 (quoted by O. Hamdan, *Studien zur Kanonisierung des Korantextes. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrīs Beiträge zur Geschichte des Korans*, Wiesbaden, 2006, p. 170): in compensation for the destruction of divergent *muṣḥaf*s, al-Ḥajjāj has sixty dirhams paid to the owners. It is interesting to observe that the value is in the same range (sixty to seventy dirhams), although little can be made of this information: we have no idea of the value of these dirhams, nor of the size of the manuscripts.

comparatively shorter than in other examples. The final *mīm* is almost round; in a few instances, a very short tail protrudes on the left side. The sickle-shaped *nūn* is not unlike the shape found in the portion of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, which has been transcribed by Hand C. The verses are separated by clusters of four to six dashes set vertically one above the other. There is no blank space left between the suras, but the end of the last line of a sura is filled with a crude decoration (for instance between suras 67 and 68 or 69 and 70). The end of sura 66 reached the end of the line; the copyist wrote the *basmala* on the next line and drew a simple headband into which he integrated the last three letters of *al-raḥīm* (fig. 10). In the two other instances, the *basmala* is marked as a verse.

The fragment is too short to provide a large amount of evidence about the orthography. The *scriptio defectiva* of *qāla*/*qālū* is apparently still the rule, with twenty occurrences in the fragment. It is still dominant in the case of *bi-āyāt* written with three denticles: I have found four examples of this orthography against one with two denticles. The *scriptio defectiva* has been used for *ʿadhāb* in seven instances against three in *scriptio plena*, with the *alif*; however, as was the case in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, the word with the indefinite direct case ending is written without the medial *alif*. On the other hand, the copyist opted for the "modern" orthography of *shayʾ*, consistently written without *alif*, and opted more frequently for the *scriptio plena* of *ʿibād*, found in two places against one in the old spelling without the *alif*.

Turning to the division into verses, one notices that there is no verse ending at 41: 13, a feature proper to the Basran and Syrian schools.[27] On the other hand, a division known in the Meccan and Medinan traditions is indicated after *bi-shimālihi* in 69: 25.[28] As mentioned previously, the *basmala* is marked as a verse. The text departs from the ʿUthmanic *rasm* in a few places. In 9: 70, where *kānū* is lacking, it may be argued that it is due to a scribal mistake. In 67: 12, the situation may be different: the copyist has written *karīm* instead of *kabīr*.

Another parchment fragment found in the same collection as my previous example is ŞE 13316-1 (fig. 11). Its fifteen folios measure 24 × 17 cm today, but they have been damaged. The original number of folios can be estimated as ca. 340 and almost 14 square meters of parchment were required for the production

27 A. Spitaler, *Die Verszählung des Koran nach islamischer Überlieferung*, Munich, 1935 [Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-historische Abteilung. Jahrgang 1935, Heft 11], p. 56.

28 Ibid., p. 64.

of the manuscript. The 18 to 22 lines of text to the page cover a surface of 20,8/21,5 × 15 cm, leaving almost no margin. The stroke is rather regular and the lines are horizontal. They are also well separated from each other, a fact which suggests that the copyist had some training. The *alif* is bending to the right and its lower extremity has the shape of a hook which is usually almost flat. The final and isolated *kāf* has its lower stroke extending towards the left beyond the point where the upper stroke turns upward; the two branches of the letter are opened. The body of the final *mīm* is rounded and has a short hair-like tail, which is oriented towards the lower left. The crescent-shaped final *nūn* sometimes has a peculiar shape, its upper part being quite developed. The verse division is diversely indicated, although there is no sign that various copyists contributed to the transcription of these fifteen folios: clusters of three or six dots arranged in the shape of a triangle, columns of five dashes set vertically … The *basmala* is not marked as a verse. The groups of five or ten verses are not singled out by a specific device. In the fragment, there is no blank line left between the suras; the end of the last line of a sura is filled with a crude decoration and the next one begins on the next line.

The orthography of the fragment evidences a move towards the *scriptio plena*. Of course, as for the former fragment, we would need more material in order to get a more accurate view. Anyhow, the *scriptio defectiva* of *qāla*/*qālū* is slightly down—to 82 percent of the thirty-three occurrences found in this fragment. The defective spelling is still dominant for the plural *ʿibād* (three occurrences) and for *bi-āyāt* written with three denticles (four examples). But the *scriptio plena* has become the norm for *ʿadhāb* (twelve cases) and *shayʾ* is written in five cases against one in the old spelling with *alif*. The old orthography of *ilāh* in 23: 91, with a denticle indicating the long /*ā*/, has been used by the copyist. To sum up, the few folios of this fragment reflect an evolution towards a slightly more developed orthography than was the case in Or. 2165.

The verse division exhibits a few specificities: the copyist did not indicate the verse ending between 21: 66 and 67 which is specific to the Kufan school,[29] nor that between 22: 63 and 64.[30] Conversely, he marked a verse ending after *wa-yaʿbudūn* in 22: 71, which is clearly a scribal mistake as the verse would be reduced to that verb alone. The text is certainly the most puzzling of those I have been able to examine. I shall mention here a few examples. On the first folio, in 20: 121, the copyist wrote *yakhfidān* instead of *yakhṣifān* (l. 7) and in 123 (l. 10) a third person plural instead of the dual *ahbitā*. In the same verse,

29 Ibid., p. 47.

30 Spitaler does not mention any disagreement about that division (see ibid., p. 48).

tabaʿa stands for *attabaʿa* (l. 11) and *fa-man* instead of *fa-lā* (l. 12). In the same line, *aʿaraḍa* is replaced by *yuʿriḍū* (20: 124). On f. 9 verso, in 22: 77, there is a dittography with a repetition of *alif* and *wāw* (l. 1). In the next verse, the scribe perhaps wrote *sammākum*, instead of *ajtabakum* (l. 2). The copyist does not seem very reliable, although he may have been transcribing from a copy containing variant readings which were not fully understood.

Before I turn to other examples, I shall attempt a brief comparison of the orthography of these five textual witnesses, based on the five words which were singled out for the analysis of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*. The results appearing in the following table have of course to be taken with caution since the corpus is somewhat heterogeneous in size, a manuscript with more than a third of the text (Or. 2165) being compared with fragments with a few folios.[31]

TABLE 1 *A comparative table of the orthography**

	Qāla		**ʿibād**		**shayʾ**		**bi-āyāt**		**ʿadhāb**		**ʿadhāb^{an}**	
	Def.	Pl.	Def.	Pl.	*alif*	'mod.'	3d	2d	Def.	Pl.	Def.	Pl.
ŞE 118	23	0	4	3	2	0	4	0	5	3	1	1
ŞE 13316	27	6	3	0	1	5	4	0	0	12	0	0
ŞE 3687	20	0	1	2	0	6	4	1	7	3	1	0
Or. 2165	211	4	19	3	29	16	27	6	27	52	5	3
Marcel 19	75	1	8	1	10	0	4	1	13	4	3	0

* Def. = defective; Pl. = *scriptio plena*; 'mod.' = 'modern' orthography; 3d = three denticles; 2d = two denticles

The evolution illustrated by the table above is far from homogeneous. As a whole, the rendering of *qāla* does not evolve dramatically. When looking more closely at the details, *qālū* seems however more frequently written in *scriptio plena* in Or. 2165 (15 percent of the occurrences) than in ŞE 118, another quarto copy. In the former manuscript, *shayʾ* is written without an *alif* in 36 percent of the cases, whereas conversely *ʿadhāb* in *scriptio plena* is representing 66 percent of the occurrences, thus suggesting a slight tendency towards an "updated" orthography. Turning to the smaller copies, ŞE 13316 points to the

31 London, BL Or. 2165 actually contains more than a third of the text, but our study is based on the portion published as a facsimile.

same direction: the *scriptio plena* is more frequent in the case of *qāla*; *ʿadhāb* and *shayʾ* are preferably written without *alif*. Both copies would therefore have to be dated slightly later than the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* or, to express things in a more cautious way, would reflect a more developed stage of Qurʾanic orthography.

A mention should be made here of a manuscript in *ḥijāzī* script which has been the subject of much debate, the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I*, the famous palimpsest (fig. 12).[32] In a recent paper, Behnam Sadeghi and Mohsen Goudarzi recounted the media excitement which has been surrounding this manuscript since its existence was made public.[33] The parchment folios measuring ca. 36,5 × 28,5 cm were discovered in the roof of the Great mosque and forty folios have been found.[34] Most of them are kept in Sanaa, with the inventory number Inv. 01–27.1. I had myself the opportunity to look briefly at the folios kept in Sanaa a few years ago and I shall use some notes taken then in combination with the information published in the various papers which have been devoted to this fragment. A new development occurred in 2012 with the "discovery" of forty folios which had been kept in the Maktaba al-Sharqiyya of the Great mosque of Sanaa.[35] We are now dealing with eighty folios, that is to say a fragment nearing the size of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*.

32 B. Sadeghi and U. Bergmann suggested to call it *Ṣanʿāʾ I* (The Codex of a Companion of the Prophet and the Qurʾān of the Prophet, *Arabica* 57 [2010], p. 347; also in B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, Sanʿaʾ 1 and the origins of the Qurʾān, *Der Islam* 87 [2010], pp. 10–11). However, since the manuscript is scattered among various collections, I shall use the various references in order to refer to a specific folio.

33 B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, op. cit., pp. 31–36.

34 Elisabeth Puin considers that 38 f. are outright part of Inv. 01–27.1 and that the folios in the David collection (Copenhagen) and in a private collection in the United States could eventually be part of the manuscript (E. Puin, Ein früher Koranpalimpsest aus Ṣanʿāʾ (DAM 01–27.1)—Teil III: Ein nicht-ʿuṯmānischer Koran, in *Die Entstehung einer Weltreligion I: Von der koranischen Bewegung zum Frühislam*, M. Groß and K.-H. Ohlig eds., Berlin, 2010, p. 248). B. Sadeghi and U. Bergmann give a total of thirty-six folios (op. cit., p. 354: four folios auctioned between 1992 and 2008 and thirty-two in Sanaa). A description of the contents can be found in Puin (op. cit., pp. 249–250) or in Sadeghi and Moudarzi (op. cit., pp. 37–39).

35 These forty folios, which are slightly smaller than those of Inv. 01–27.1, have been the subject of a master thesis by Razān Ghassān Ḥamdūn submitted in 2004 (*al-Makhṭūṭāt al-Qurʾāniyya fī Ṣanʿāʾ mundhu al-qarn al-awwal al-hijrī*). However, the relationship between this portion and the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* was discovered only in 2012 (see the website Islamic Awareness: http://www.islamicawareness.org/Quran/Text/Mss/soth.html). Ms. Ḥamdūn provides a transcription of the *scriptio superior* indicating the orthographical variants.

A first text, the *scriptio inferior*, has been erased and the parchment used again for the transcription of a second text. Both are decidedly Qurʾanic, although the first one exhibits some peculiarities in the sequence of the suras as well as in the text itself to which I shall return. The second one is a canonical copy, with a few orthographic specificities. In an auction house catalogue, a folio has been described as part of a pre-ʿUthmanic *muṣḥaf* on the assumption that the second text was also in *ḥijāzī* script, from the first/seventh century, which meant that the first one should have been written before ca. 50 AH.[36] A C14 dating has been performed on a parchment sample taken from a folio now in a private collection in the United States: it concluded with 95 percent possibility that the parchment was produced between 578 and 669 AD and with 68 percent possibility that it belongs to a period between 614 and 656 AD.[37]

The parchment used for the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* seems to have been of a lower quality than that of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* or London, BL Or. 2165. Actually, some of its folios exhibit wounds and in one instance the upper corner of a folio was lacking from the beginning—which means that the copyist used a damaged piece of parchment.[38] When the manuscript was rebound after completion of the upper level of text, the folios were slightly trimmed, but it does not seem that the margins of the original codex were significantly broader than those of other *ḥijāzī* copies of the earliest period. The text is very irregularly transcribed, with some folios having as little as the equivalent of 18,5 lines of the Cairo edition, on f. Stanford recto for instance, while up to 37 lines of this edition have been transcribed on f. SG 15A.[39] This makes the estimate of the original size of the manuscript tentative—the more so because the size of the text as a whole may have been at variance with that of the ʿUthmanic *rasm*; however, its production may have required slightly more than 20 square meters, in other words more than the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*.

36 Sotheby's, sale of 22–23 October 1992, lot 551.

37 B. Sadeghi and U. Bergmann, op. cit., p. 348. The folio was sold in 1993 by Sotheby's (sale of 22 October 1993, lot 31).

38 E. Puin, op. cit., p. 240 and fig.; B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, op. cit., p. 57, n. 170 and 173 (f. SG 6b).

39 We refer to the folio number according to the edition of the *scriptio inferior* by Sadeghi and Goudarzi (B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, op. cit., pp. 41–115). When a folio also appears on Puin's list (E. Puin, op. cit., pp. 249–250), with her own numbering, we give the two references, e.g. f. SG 2a/P 2a.

The upper level will not detain me: it could be dated to the second/eighth century as suggested by the orthography of *ʿalā* with final *alif* instead of *alif maqṣūra*,[40] or by the script itself, which has been repeatedly characterised as *ḥijāzī*, although it exhibits some letter shapes which can be related to the C group—with a somewhat ungainly appearance.[41]

The *scriptio inferior*, that is to say the text which is chronologically the first one written on the parchment, is difficult to observe as the letters are erased and partly covered by the second text. The number of lines to the page varies from 25 to 30 on folios which are slightly larger than the quarto copies seen so far. The script is somewhat irregular, with the lines sometimes straying away from the horizontal and some variable letter shapes—for instance a *hāʾ* with a straight back, sometimes bending to the left, emerging from an almost semi-circular belly which slightly straddles the base line, found next to a heart-shaped *hāʾ*, with its point on the line to the left and its lower part below the line. Final *mīm* is sometimes close to a perfectly rounded shape, with only a tiny sting protruding to the left, sometimes exhibiting a flat tail—a feature, which recalls that of Hand D of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* (fig. 4). The final *kāf* is close to the shape found in that manuscript, but with a shorter lower horizontal stroke. Diacritical dots are not very numerous. Sadeghi and Bergmann noted one instance of dotting which might be for a short vowel.[42] The script of the *scriptio inferior* does not seem to be the work of a skilled professional and includes elements which could be dated to the second half of the first/seventh century.

The suras are not separated by a blank line, but by a crude ornament which is contemporaneous with the script itself:[43] as in the smaller copies, it either fills the end of the last line, or, when the beginning of the line is only occupied by a few letters, it covers part of the remaining space and is followed by the beginning of the *basmala* written at the end of the same line (fig. 12). Elisabeth Puin was able to observe that a final formula with the title of the preceding

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40 Sadeghi and Bergmann note that there is a difference in this respect between the two layers (B. Sadeghi and U. Bergmann, op. cit., p. 356). In the folios studied by Ms. Ḥamdūn, two hands are present, one writing *ʿalā* with *alif maqṣūra* (see R. Gh. Ḥamdūn, op. cit., pl. 27, l. 2 and 20), the other preferring instead the orthography with *alif mamdūda* (*passim*, for instance pl. 43, l. 3 and 11).

41 See the typology in F. Déroche, op. cit. (1983), pp. 39–41, pl. XII–XV; id., *The Abbasid tradition, Qurʾans of the 8th to the 10th centuries* [The Nasser D. Khalili collection of Islamic art, I], London, 1992, pp. 40–41; A. George, op. cit., pp. 152–153.

42 B. Sadeghi and U. Bergmann, op. cit., p. 359.

43 E. Puin, op. cit., p. 246; B. Sadeghi and U. Bergmann, op. cit., p. 348.

sura was found in some cases.[44] Verse endings are visible in some places, and Sadeghi and Goudarzi noticed a special shape for the hundredth and two-hundredth verses of sura 2.[45] They consist of dots arranged in various ways, which might imply another case of team-work: single or double columns as well as triangle disposition have been observed on the folios. In some places at least, the *basmala* is marked as a verse.[46]

The Qurʾanic text is transcribed in *scriptio defectiva*, although here and there cases of *scriptio plena* appear: *kāna/kānū* is systematically written according to the latter (see for instance on Inv. 01–27.1, f. SG 9a/P 7a and SG 23b/P 19b, *passim*),[47] while *qālū* appears sometimes with the medial *alif* as on Inv. 01–27.1, f. SG 2a/P 2a, l. 5 et 14 (2:88 and 91, but perhaps defectively on l. 21, 2:93), f. SG 15b (l. 12 and 16) and f. SG 20a/P 16a, l. 10 (twice in 9:74). I have also found instances of *ʿadhāb* in *scriptio plena* on Inv. 01–27.1, f. SG 2a/P 2a, l. 13 (2:90), f. SG 2b/P 2b, l. 1 (2: 96) and perhaps l. 25 (2:104), f. SG 18b/P 14b, l. 12 (but next to it *ʿadh(ā)bī* is written defectively in 15:50) and f. SG 20a/P 16a, l. 22 (9:79).

For many years, the nature and extent of the textual variants of the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* have been the subject of speculations based on rumours and although various attempts have been made during the last decade to publish either parts of the *scriptio inferior*[48] or its entirety,[49] a scientific edition based on good

44 Ibid.; also in B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, op. cit., transcription of Inv. 01–27.1, f. 5a, l. 8; 22a, l. 22–23; 26b, l. 14; Christie's 2008, v°, l. 19 and r°, l. 3 and 23.

45 B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, op. cit., p. 43 and n. 98, and p. 46 and n. 114. This feature may be indicative of a more recent date.

46 A verse ending is indicated after the *basmala* of s. 63 (f. Christie's 2008, l. 1), but not after that of s. 19 (Inv. 01–27.1, f. 22a, l. 24). The beginning of s. 9 (Inv. 01–27.1, f. 5a, l. 8) is a special case; the *basmala* with a verse ending is followed by the comment: *lā taqul bi-smi Allāhi* (B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, op. cit., p. 53 and n. 157).

47 As mentioned above, reference is made to the two numberings of the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I*, first that of Sadeghi and Goudarzi with their initials (SG) followed by the folio number, then that of Puin (P) according to the same principle.

48 E. Puin, Ein früher Koranpalimpsest aus Ṣanʿāʾ (DAM 01–27.1), in *Schlaglichter: Die beiden ersten islamischen Jahrhunderte*, M. Groß and K.-H. Ohlig eds., Berlin, 2008, pp. 461–493; id., Ein früher Koranpalimpsest aus Ṣanʿāʾ (DAM 01–27.1)—Teil II, in *Vom Koran zum Islam*, M. Groß and K.-H. Ohlig eds., Berlin, 2009, pp. 523–581; id., op. cit., pp. 233–305; A. Fedeli, Early Evidences of Variant Readings in Qurʾānic Manuscripts, in *Die dunklen Anfänge: Neue Forschungen zur Entstehung und frühen Geschichte des Islam*, K.-H. Ohlig and G.-R. Puin, Berlin, 2007, pp. 298–316.

49 B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, op. cit., pp. 41–115. A transcription is currently being prepared by Hediye Gurtmann in the frame of the French-German project *Coranica*.

photographs is still lacking.[50] For this reason, I shall limit myself to a few general remarks on this matter. At the more general level of variation, the order of the suras differs from the standard text: s. 8 comes after s. 11, s. 19 after s. 9, s. 18 after s. 12, s. 25 after s. 15, s. 13 after s. 34, s. 62 after s. 63 and s. 89 after s. 62.[51] As noted by Sadeghi and Goudarzi, there is a broad agreement with Ubayy's codex … Other Qur'anic manuscripts found in Sanaa similarly reveal a different sequence of the suras.[52]

The defective orthography has been mentioned above and its peculiarities should be analysed in detail, but it does not seem very different from the situation prevailing in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*. When it comes to the text itself, the variants cover a wide range of situations which Puin tried to sum up in her presentation.[53] As for the other manuscripts, the possibility of scribal errors cannot be discarded, but this explanation may only be valid for a limited number of cases. Close to a scribal mistake are the transpositions which imply moving an element from one place to another within the same verse. A variety of synonyms is found in the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I*, ranging from a copula to a group of words.[54] The former case can be compared to a situation encountered in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* for instance.[55] Synonyms are also known in the Islamic tradition to have been used during the early period by those who recited the Qur'an according to the meaning.[56]

The influence of the other variants on the meaning itself varies greatly. Puin notes for instance an interesting case in Inv. 01–27.1, f. SG 11b/P 9b, l. 16–17 where the stereotyped final formula of 24:35 is completely different from that found in the ʿUthmanic version, without altering the meaning of the rest of the verse.[57] Things may be different when the changes concern the verbal forms or the person(s) involved (verbs or pronouns).[58] The same applies to the

50 The recent "discovery" of forty additional folios (which have been the subject of Razan Ghassan Hamdoun's master thesis) should also be taken into account.

51 B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, op. cit., p. 25, Table 2.

52 G. Puin, Observations on early Qur'an manuscripts in Sanʿa', in *The Qur'an as text*, S. Wild ed., Leiden-New York-Köln, 1996, p. 109.

53 E. Puin, op. cit. (2010), pp. 262–275 offers a synthesis of the various situations she identified.

54 Ibid., p. 264 for instance.

55 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), pp. 106–107.

56 G. Schoeler, *The genesis of literature in Islam. From the aural to the read*, Revised edition, Edinburgh, 2009, p. 33.

57 E. Puin, op. cit. (2010), p. 263. This should be compared with the "short verses" found in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, although in this case there is no difference with the canonical version of the Qur'an (see ch. 1).

58 E. Puin, op. cit. (2010), p. 267.

various omissions and additions, which can be found in the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I*. A comparison of the latter with the ʿUthmanic version shows for instance that some textual elements are missing. In various instances, a single word is lacking but in sura 9 verse 85 was left out in its entirety (Inv. 01–27.1, f. SG 20b/P 16b).[59] Conversely, the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* also contains additional material, from articles to words or groups of words which, in some cases, help making the sense of the verse more explicit. This is especially clear in verse 24:10: the apodosis which is missing in the ʿUthmanic version appears in Inv. 01–27.1, f. SG 10a/P 8r, l. 20–21.[60]

In a paper devoted to two folios from the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I*, Alba Fedeli noted a coincidence with the reading of Ibn Masʿūd.[61] In her last study of Inv. 01–27.1, Puin underlined on the other hand that the text sometimes agreed with Ibn Masʿūd or Ubayy readings, but sometimes took another stand. She concluded that it is "another Qurʾan" ("ein 'anderer Koran'").[62] Sadeghi and Goudarzi reached the same conclusion: "the lower writing of Ṣanʿāʾ I clearly falls outside the standard text type. It belongs to a different text type, which we call C-I."[63]

The variants found in this copy prompted wild speculations about its date. The assumption that the upper layer of script (*scriptio superior*) was added shortly after the completion of the lower level led to an attribution of the first text transcription to an early date in the first/seventh century. As Puin wrote, the two layers of script "liegen … zeitlich eng beisammen; beide sind in demselben … Duktus geschrieben, der im 1. Jahrhundert der Higrah … in Gebrauch war."[64] The C14 dating was another strong argument in the same direction.

Fedeli concluded cautiously that

> the non-standard *lectio* found in the palimpsest is not to be considered as proof of the pre-ʿÛthmānic (*sic*) period, because it was just in the fourth century that Abū Bakr b. Mugāhid (*sic*) … accepted only the readings based on a fairly uniform consonantal text.[65]

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59 Ibid., p. 269 and 299. See B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, op. cit., p. 23 and 61, n. 203, who suggest a "saut du même au même."

60 E. Puin, op. cit. (2010), p. 273.

61 A. Fedeli, op. cit., p. 305 and 315.

62 E. Puin, op. cit. (2010), p. 235.

63 B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, op. cit., p. 17.

64 E. Puin, op. cit. (2010), p. 233.

65 A. Fedeli, op. cit., p. 315 (wrongly understood by Sadeghi and Bergmann, op. cit., p. 363, n. 31).

Sadeghi and Goudarzi rightly stressed that the question of the date of the manuscript should not be confused with that of the text itself.[66] As I suggested previously, some features of the *scriptio superior* are more in tune with second/eighth century copies and should therefore not compel us to "age" the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I*. A few cases of *scriptio plena* in the earliest level of text, although insufficient to be taken as a support for a later date, suggest that it was written while the enhancement of the Qurʾanic orthography was under way. The presence of sura titles and of decorative devices between the suras point to a later date in the first/seventh century, since those elements were not found originally in copies like the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, but were added later.[67] If Sadeghi and Bergmann's finding about short vowel marks is correct, it could become an additional argument for a late date for the original codex. The C14 dating has nevertheless weighed heavily in the attribution of the original codex, corresponding to the *scriptio inferior*, to an early period. However, I have suggested in the introduction that these results have to be considered carefully. Other analysis of the parchment performed on samples taken from two folios of Inv. 01–27.1 (f. 2 and 8) gave respectively a date between 543 and 643 AD and between 433 and 599 AD, with 95 percent possibility.[68] I would therefore suggest on the basis of the various points I enumerated that the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* was written during the second half of the first/seventh century and erased at the earliest by the middle of the following century.

The *scriptio inferior* of the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* has been transcribed in a milieu which adhered to a text of the Qur'an different from the ʿUthmanic tradition as well as from the Qur'anic codices of Ibn Masʿūd and Ubayy. The very gauche and irregular script should not hide the fact that the person(s) who

66 B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, op. cit., p. 18.

67 According to a source going back to the second/eighth century, the copy transcribed by Mālik b. Abī ʿĀmir al-Asbahī (d. 74/693) had ornamental bands in black ink as sura dividers (M. Cook, A Koranic codex inherited by Malik from his grandfather, in *Proceedings of the Sixth International congress on Graeco-Oriental and African studies*, V. Christides and Th. Papadopoulos eds., *Graeco-Arabica* 7–8 [1999–2000], p. 95; also M.M. al-Azami, *The history of the Qurʾanic text from revelation to compilation. A comparative study with the Old and New Testaments*, Leicester, 2003, p. 100 and 170–172). The use of ornaments as sura dividers may actually go back to the reign of ʿUthmān, when Mālik's grandfather transcribed his copy, according to Mālik himself. On the other hand, there is a tradition of leaving a blank line, which seems dominant, and the ornamental bands may have been added at a later date to Mālik's copy.

68 Personal communication of Ch. Robin. Folio numbers according to the table in Puin (op. cit., p. 249).

wanted this specific version of the Qur'anic text spent probably as much money on the parchment as the patrons behind such copies as the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*—although it was of lesser quality. However, in spite of its size, its layout has more to do with the group of smaller Qur'anic codices which may have been produced for individuals than with the larger manuscripts like the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* we suggested to have been officially supported. The way in which the suras are separated points in the same direction.

The fact that the manuscript is a palimpsest should also be examined in a history of the book perspective. It is actually an almost unique case in the Islamic manuscript tradition. Another purported example of Qur'anic palimpsest turned to be a correction[69] and all the other cases of Arabic palimpsests, including the Cambridge palimpsest (Or. 1287.13),[70] belong to the Christian Arabic tradition. If "recycling parchment in this manner was not uncommon" in the Western tradition,[71] this was apparently not the case in the Islamic world. Although other Qur'anic palimpsests are said to be preserved among the parchments found in the Great mosque of Sanaa,[72] this procedure seems quite exceptional and should be seen as a significant element in the history of the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* in its radical implementation—quite different from the situation of the Cambridge palimpsest. According to my direct knowledge of three large collections of early Qur'anic copies, those of Damascus, Fustat and Kairouan, there is no parallel to the situation found in Sanaa. Sadeghi and Goudarzi suggest various explanations for the recycling of the manuscript. The first one relies on the hypothesis that the manuscript was worn out, but, judging from the folios which have come down to us, the state of the parchment is quite satisfactory. Of course, parts of it (one thinks of the beginning or the end) may have been more damaged, either as a result of intensive use or by accident. But this would not

69 Vienna, ÖNB, fragment A. Perg. 2; see H. Loebenstein, op. cit., p. vol. 1, pp. 23–26, no 1 and vol. 2, pl. 1–2; A. Fedeli, A. Perg.2: A Non Palimpsest and the Corrections in Qurʾānic Manuscripts, *Manuscripta Orientalia* 11.1 (2005), pp. 20–27.

70 A.S. Lewis and A. Mingana, *Leaves from three ancient Qur'âns, possibly pre-ʿOthmânic*, Cambridge, 1914. See also A. Fedeli (Early Evidences of Variant Readings in Qurʾānic Manuscripts, in *Die dunklen Anfänge: Neue Forschungen zur Entstehung und frühen Geschichte des Islam*, K.-H. Ohlig and G.-R. Puin, Berlin, 2007, pp. 293–296, about the history of the palimpsest) and A. George (Le palimpseste Lewis-Mingana de Cambridge, témoin ancien de l'histoire du Coran, *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Comptes rendus des séances de l'année 2011* [2012], *sous presse*).

71 B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, op. cit., p. 9.

72 Ibid., p. 6, n. 9; the authors quote Ursula Dreibholz who informed them that the collection included "several other palimpsests … all relatively late."

entail the erasure of the entire manuscript. Actually, we do have examples of old Qur'anic copies completed by replacements (sometimes in paper) of worn out or lost folios. Erasing the text was an exceptional procedure which has to be taken as such. In the case of (possibly) non-ʿUthmanic textual witnesses of the Qur'an, the Muslim tradition knows actually another procedure: ʿUthmān himself is reported to have ordered the destruction of earlier Qur'anic codices.[73] The *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* illustrates the weight of the economy vs. the ideological perspective: during the second/eighth century, its owner(s) may have decided to recycle the parchment and have a copy conforming with the mainstream text rather than destroying a costly material. It is perfectly natural on the other hand that the parchment with an erased Qur'anic text could have been used for a copy of the Qur'an.

Leaving aside the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* which has not yet been properly described from a codicological point of view, the *ḥijāzī muṣḥaf*s which have been discussed above as well as the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* share a few material features as far as their script and their lay out is concerned. However, when going through the evidence on the basis of the definition of the *ḥijāzī* style of script, other fragments provide a more complex picture of this stage of Qur'anic manuscript production.

A fragment from the ʿAmr mosque in Fustat provides us with a first example (Saint Petersburg, NLR Marcel 18/2; fig. 13).[74] This copy of the Qur'an in vertical format (33×25 cm), written on parchment in a variety of *ḥijāzī*, reminds us strongly at first glance of the usual features found in the previous examples. The 23 to 26 lines to the page have been prepared by a ruling with a lead pencil. The divisions into verses are usually marked out by triangular clusters of six dots and the groups of ten by a circular device in red, surrounded by dots; the latter seems to have been added. At the end of a sura, the verse end mark is expanded into a larger triangular cluster, with seven dots on each side. The *basmala* is indicated as a verse in most of the cases. A line has been left blank between the suras; a later hand has added the title and the number of verses in red, preceded by "*fātiḥa*". The orthography is mostly in keeping with the *scriptio defectiva*—*qāla* was originally written without the *alif* on Marcel 18, f. 30b, l. 2, 4, 6, 17 and 20, but with *alif* on l. 13, as is also the case for *qālat* (l. 8–9 and

73 See for instance V. Comerro, *Les traditions sur la constitution du* muṣḥaf *de ʿUthman*, Beirut, 2012, pp. 86–88.

74 20 f. are in Saint Petersburg (25: 72–32: 16). 2 f. are in Paris, BnF Arabe 328d (F. Déroche, op. cit. (1983), p. 67, no 14, with 42: 6–43: 17).

13–14) and *qālū* (l. 19 and 22). On the other hand, a few elements of the lay out suggest that a change has taken place. The script in particular distinguishes itself from that of the manuscripts seen so far: the *alif* bending to the right has a far more conspicuous lower hook—although its size varies notably—and the final or isolated *kāf* contrasts with the shape of the letter found previously: its horizontal strokes have almost the same length, the lower one stopping at the level of the vertical shaft. In the typology of the early Qurʾanic scripts, it can be defined as B Ia.[75] Interestingly enough, there are real margins on the three outer sides of the page and the copyist draws a short horizontal stroke at the end of the lines when he fails to reach the left hand edge of the justification with the text (on l. 3, 7 and 10).

Another fragment, slightly bigger than the previous one (39,8×27,9 cm, 27 lines to the page), was formerly kept in the deposit of old manuscripts in the Great mosque in Damascus (Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 56).[76] Here again, the script squares with al-Nadīm's description of the *ḥijāzī* style, notably the bending to the right of the shafts. On the other hand, some of its features are not consistent with those of the first group of manuscripts and can also be defined as B Ia. The *alif*, as in the previous example, has a larger lower hook and the two horizontal and parallel strokes of the final or isolated *kāf* have the same length. As for the final *mīm*, it terminates with a horizontal tail and the medial *hāʾ* looks like a half circle straddling the line. The verses are separated by clusters of dots and a very simple device drawn with ink has been inserted between the two suras. There is not much evidence for the orthography: we can note the old orthography of *shayʾ* written with an *alif* after the *shīn*. As in the previous example, margins surround the justification and a line end filling device is found on l. 3. After the last word of sura 28, a wavy line drawn with the same ink as the text fills the rest of the space and reaches the outer margin. The latter is less conspicuous as in the former instance.

A third example is a large folio (50×36 cm) with 31 to 32 lines to the page from the Sanaa trove which was exhibited in Kuwait (Inv. 00–30.1).[77] For the author of the catalogue, there is no doubt that the fragment is "late *ḥijāzī*". The

75 F. Déroche, op. cit. (1983), p. 37 and pl. IX. The inscription of Mecca dated 80/700 exhibits palaeographical features related to this group, although here with vertical shafts (see S. al-Rāshid, *Kitābāt islāmiyya min Makka al-Mukarrama. Dirāsa wa-taḥqīq*, Riyadh, 1416/1995, pp. 26–29 and fig. 66; reproduced in M.M. al-Azami, op. cit., fig. 9.13, and A. George, op. cit., fig. 14).

76 Reproduced in A.S. Demirkol et al., op. cit., p. 146.

77 *Maṣāḥif Sanʿaʾ*, Kuwait, 1985, p. 53, no 24.

description provides little detail about the fragment and the information I have derives mainly from the picture. Once again, features of the *ḥijāzī* style appear quite clearly, with the *alif* slightly slanting to the right, but with a lower hook which closely resembles the former example. The same applies to the final *mīm* or to the medial *hā'*, whereas both shapes of final *kāf* are present. As for the orthography, the *scriptio plena* is used for *qālū* (l. 27), but *ʿadhāb* (l. 2 and 17) is written without *alif*—it was later corrected. *Shay'* and *bi-āyāt* are written with "modern" orthography. The margins which surround the justification on the three outer sides are important and the left hand extremity of various lines is occupied by a filling device. The size of the folios indicates that the manuscript was a folio volume, but the amount of text to the page suggests that it had only about 150 folios.

The conception of the page reflected by these examples is clearly different from that of the first examples of this chapter. Greater attention was paid to the overall presentation—as indicated by the wider margins or the devices used in order to get a neater vertical left side of justification. The format remained unchanged, which is not the case of another group of copies which are transcribed on oblong codices.

It is widely thought that the oblong format was introduced at a later date, for reasons which are disputed and do not need to detain us here. However, a few fragments on this format have an air of antiquity about them and could be dated to the first/seventh century. The proportions vary and in some cases the width of the volume was quite important and contrasted with its height (fig. 14).[78] Two of them were once in the deposit of the Umayyad mosque in Damascus. The first one (Istanbul, TIEM, ŞE 9052) is a small copy (9×15,7 cm) written on parchment, sharing many features with the first group of *ḥijāzī* Qur'anic copies (fig. 15). The script has a distinct *ḥijāzī* appearance with the *alif* slanting to the right and the specific shape of the final *kāf* (l. 4). There is a fair amount of diacritical marks—the *qāf* being recognisable by the dot set below the head of the letter. As a whole, the chirodictic presentation which can be found in *Allāh* or in the ductus of the medial *ʿayn* remind us of Hand B in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*. The verses are separated by groups of four dots. The orthography is an example of *scriptio defectiva*, with omission of the *alif* in *mutajānif* (l. 3), *al-jawāriḥ* (l. 5), then *ṭaʿām* (l. 10 and 11). I shall lastly mention the almost complete lack of margins. On the other hand, the 11 lines to the page imply that the complete copy was probably a multivolume set since

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78 Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 3702 can be compared to Sanaa, Inv. 00–18.3 (ibid., p. 54, no. 23).

a single volume would have had too many folios. If this was the case, it would contrast with what has been observed previously.

The second example, also from Damascus (Istanbul, TIEM, ŞE 12827/1), is even more puzzling (fig. 16). The copy is written on larger oblong parchment folios (15,3 × 21 cm) which are entirely covered with the script, without any margins. The first line was actually so close to the upper edge of the folio that the copyist had to write *al-kitāb* at the beginning of l. 2 because the space left at the end of l. 1, although sufficient to accommodate the word horizontally, was not high enough for its shafts. The main features of the *ḥijāzī* script—the *alif* slanting to the right or the final *kāf* on l. 3—are present and the diacriticals are few. The division into verses is systematically indicated. The orthography seems quite archaic. Examples of *scriptio defectiva* abound, with the omission of the *alif* in noting the long /*ā*/, and are similar to those found in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*: *li-l-abrār* (l. 1), *wa-ṣābirū wa-rābiṭū* (l. 5), or in s. 4 *rijālan* (l. 9) and *wa-l-arḥām* (l. 10). On l. 3, the three denticles orthography of *bi-āyāt* has been used by the copyist. The transition from s. 3 to s. 4 is very peculiar. On l. 6, the last two words of s. 3 are followed by a crude ornament which occupies part of the space left; the end of the line is filled up by the beginning of the *basmala* until the first letter of *raḥīm*. The rest of the word is found at the beginning of next line. It is separated from the first verse of s. 4 by the title: *hadhihi sūrat al-nisā'*. It is so closely combined with the text itself that we can exclude a later addition, but it seems a rather "modern" feature when compared with the Qur'anic copies examined so far, with the exception of the *Codex Ṣan'ā' I*. It is one of the earliest examples of sura titles included from the beginning in the copy.

As was the case for the copies in vertical format, there are also oblong format codices in *ḥijāzī* style which exhibit characteristics suggesting a later date in the Umayyad period. I shall adduce three examples to illustrate this point. The first one is kept in Kairouan and has been recently exhibited (fig. 17).[79] It contains 86 parchment folios of 17,5 × 28,5 cm, with 12 lines of text to the page (13,8 × 25,2 cm). In contrast to the two previous fragments, the justification left some space on its three outer sides in order to have a small margin. The *alif* slanting to the right and the final *kāf* with a lower horizontal extension (which is however shorter than in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*) are clearly related to the *ḥijāzī* style of script, but the overall appearance is more regular. Actually,

79 Kairouan, Musée des arts islamiques, R 119; see *Lumières de Kairouan*, Tunis, 2009, p. 34. The contents of the volume are not available.

the ruling is more sophisticated than the simple outline found in other copies discussed previously; here a complete grid has been drawn on each folio, which explains that the number of lines to the page remains stable. The diacritics are scant, but many short vowels are marked—although this may be an addition. The verse divisions are systematically indicated and the *basmala* is punctuated as a verse.

The orthography does not differ much from that of older copies: *bi-āyāt* is still written with the three denticles as in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* and an *alif* is still found in *shayʾ*. The *scriptio defectiva* of *ʿadhāb* would point to a rather conservative orthography, but *qāla* and *qālū* appear to be frequently in *scriptio plena*.

The thirty-nine folios of the second fragment were in the ʿAmr mosque in Fustat before they reached European collections (fig. 18).[80] In terms of its size, this copy is close to Kairouan, Musée des arts islamiques, R 119 (18 × 28,5 cm). Its original number of folios can be estimated at ca. 350, corresponding to ca. 18 square meters of parchment. As in R 119, a grid has been drawn with a dry point on the parchment. In the quires, the hair sides of the parchment face the hair sides (and conversely flesh sides face flesh sides). The 12 lines of script to the page are carefully written by a professional hand who sometimes does not hesitate to end a letter like final *qāf* or *yāʾ* on the last line of text by a flourish or an extension into the lower margin—like in Paris, BnF Arabe 326, f. 5b for instance. In this manuscript, the two horizontal strokes of the final *kāf* are of equal length—the lower one may in some cases be slightly extended. A small margin has been left on the three outer sides of the leaves. The space between the top of the ascenders and the line above tends to be more important than in previous examples.

The orthography is complex, with variations between the *scriptio defectiva* and *plena*. As a rule, *qāla* seems to be consistently written without *alif* (see for instance at 10: 28, 71 or 77), but *qālū* appears sometimes with its defective orthography (e.g. 10: 68 and 76), sometimes in *scriptio plena* (e.g. 8: 21, 31, 32).

80 Saint Petersburg, NLR, Marcel 9 (32 f.); Paris, BnF, Arabe 326 a (six folios); London, The Nasser D. Khalili collection of Islamic art, KFQ 34 (one folio). To these folios can be added the thirty-six folios which were sold in Rennes (Cabinet d'expertise M.C. David, *Collection d'un Antiquaire de la première moitié du XXe siècle*, Rennes Enchères, 19 September 2011, lot no 152). See F. Déroche, op. cit. (1983), p. 59, no 1; id., op. cit. (1992), p. 32 and fig. p. 31; A. George, op. cit., p. 92 and fig. 62. The Parisian folios of the manuscript can be accessed on the Gallica website of the BnF (gallica.bnf.fr). An edition is currently prepared by Eléonore Cellard in the frame of the French-German project *Coranica*.

The same applies to *ʿadhāb*—written defectively at 8: 50 or 9: 39 and 115, but with the *alif* at 8: 14, 32, or 10: 52, 54 or 70—or *bi-āyāt*, with the "three denticles" orthography at 8: 41 (twice), 9: 9 or 10: 17, but with an *alif* after the *yāʾ* at 10: 71, 73 and 75.[81] On Saint Petersburg, NLR, Marcel 9, f. 6a, *shayʾ* is written first with its "modern" orthography (8: 72), then with the *alif* (8: 75); elsewhere in the fragment, both old and new versions are found (9: 32 and 115, for instance, against 8: 14 or 32). At 9: 129, the old orthography of *ilāh* with a *yāʾ* indicating the /*ā*/ has been corrected by an erasure of the denticle. Verbs like *raʾa* in the third person plural of the past tense are still written without the *alif al-wiqāyah* (e.g. 10: 54 or 8: 72), whereas *dhū* keeps its final *alif* (10: 60 or 57: 21).

Two canonical variant readings are found in this fragment: the first one, at 9: 107, is in accordance with the Medina and Damascus tradition, but the fragment does not follow the specific Damascan reading at 10: 22, which would suggest that the text was in keeping with the Medina codex. However, peculiarities in the verse division should be noted. Interestingly enough, this fragment knows the "short" verse in 9: 115, like the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, although it fails to indicate another one in 10: 10.[82] The *basmala* is marked as a verse. The last word of a sura is sometimes followed by a series of groups of dots, contemporaneous with the copy.

The third example takes us back to Kairouan where two folios of the manuscript have been preserved.[83] Their size (17,3 × 28,6 cm) and the number of lines to the page (12; writing surface: 14,1 × 23,8 cm) are similar to the two previous copies. Similarly, there is a small margin on the three outer sides of the leaves and the space between the top of the ascenders and the line above is still more important than in Saint Petersburg, NLR, Marcel 9—actually the size of the script is quite reduced.

As we have seen, the copies of the Qurʾan written in the *ḥijāzī* style of script exhibit a diversity of situations. In addition to the idiosyncratic appearance of the script itself in the various copies, the lay out and the orthography reflect various orientations. We therefore have to distinguish between a few groups of manuscripts, corresponding to different stages of the transmission of the Qurʾanic text. Copies like the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* exemplify a first step (not necessarily the oldest one, since they include details which show

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81 Note also *ʿibād*: 9: 104, written defectively.

82 It contains another "short verse" in 10: 4 (Saint Petersburg, NLR, Marcel 9, f. 18a). It should be noted that the division into verses is idiosyncratic and requires a thorough study.

83 Kairouan, Musée des arts islamiques, P 511. Information kindly provided by Dr. M. Rammah.

that they result from the transcription of an older original). Other manuscripts reflect a more sophisticated level of lay out and orthography: this is the case of the vertical copies with large margins and line end filling devices. The oblong format manuscripts are more difficult to date: some of them may be dated to the first/seventh century, like Istanbul, TIEM, ŞE 9052, but the group of three 12-lines-to-the-page copies may be later (first half of the second/eighth century). Writing about the second one, Alain George concludes that it "suggests a conscious reference to the Hijazi past and the oldest written form of the Qur'an."[84]

The description of the *ḥijāzī* style of script provided by al-Nadīm,[85] short and tantalising as it may be has been the criterion for the selection of the various manuscripts discussed here. The clues it offers coincide fairly well with most of the examples. Or. 2165 or Marcel 19 would be for instance among the few instances of *alif* devoid of the lower hook mentioned by al-Nadīm.[86] On the other hand, this description seems to have the status of lowest common denominator when we put the various manuscripts or fragments side by side and start to figure out how a more precise definition could be reached. The variable ability of the copyists, ranging from professional to unskilful, tends to complicate matters, so that the diversity of the general appearance of the page and of the individual letters actually makes such an attempt overambitious. It seems therefore more prudent to speak of *ḥijāzī* style rather then *ḥijāzī* script—in the same way as will be the case with later scripts of Abbasid times. This heterogeneity reflects a moment of the history of Islam when the importance of a control over the script had not yet been perceived—or only imperfectly—by those who held power. At the beginning, the *ḥijāzī* style still reflects individual use and is at the same time very closely related to the documentary script found on the papyri, for instance. I can only quote again the words of the papyrologist Adolf Grohmann, who wrote that "it [was] quite important to state that this style of writing (= *ḥijāzī*) is … a secular script."[87] The *ḥijāzī* style predates the emergence of the concept of Qur'anic script, that is to say scripts exclusively used for the transcription of the Qur'an. Every single copyist has his own version of the style, although some basic features are common to all of them. In addition to the *alif* and the vertical lengthening of the strokes described by al-Nadīm, I would suggest to include the shape of the

84 A. George, op. cit., p. 92.

85 See Introduction.

86 This explains why J. von Karabacek (op. cit., p. 324) suggested to identify this script with the *mā'il* he found in Flügel's edition of the *Fihrist*.

87 A. Grohmann, The problem of dating early Qur'āns, *Der Islam* 33 (1958), pp. 221–222.

final or isolated *kāf* with its hairpin-like body with the horizontal lower stroke on the base line extending towards the left, beyond the point whence the upper horizontal stroke makes a sharp turn upwards.[88] The preceding remarks should however be qualified: a few manuscripts do not fit this description. First, a group of copies is characterised by a final or isolated *kāf* with its two horizontal strokes of equal length. How should we understand this situation? Is this shape of *kāf* typical of a region or is it a chronological marker? Second, a few examples of the B Ia style are found among them: their situation contradicts to some extent what has been said of the variability of the *ḥijāzī* style since a graphic repertoire is repeated by various copyists. In this case again, the same questions arise. I shall turn back to them below.

According to the meagre information we have at hand, all the copies discussed here seem to be one volume *muṣḥaf*—with the possible exception of some of the oblong manuscripts. In spite of the fragmentary state of the evidence, with no complete copy of the Qur'an preserved, multivolume sets—from two to thirty or sixty—seem to have been the exception at that time. In the case of the London manuscript Or. 2165, a division into sevenths has been added by a later hand but the copy is obviously unitary and in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* various places where one might expect a division into volumes point into the same direction. The situation is more difficult to assess when only a small fraction of the manuscript has come down to us, but the number of lines to the page may be taken as an indication of the unitary character of the copies.

Although the following remark should be taken with care in view of the provisional state of our knowledge of the material, it seems that a comparatively large amount of fair size copies, very often quarto volumes, has been preserved, a fact which might be related to the concern expressed in various early accounts that Qur'anic manuscripts should be large. In at least one case, Sanaa, DaM Inv. 00–30.1, the volume was a folio copy of the text.[89]

There is unanimity among the manuscripts in the choice of the single column of text. In the Near Eastern manuscript traditions of that period, variations on that point can be observed. The Syriac manuscripts, for instance, know both

88 See F. Déroche, op. cit. (1999).

89 *Maṣāḥif Ṣanʿā'*, op. cit., p. 53, no 24. Another folio volume is Paris, BnF Arabe 331 (41,3 × 34,8 cm, with 19 lines of text to the page), written in B Ia script. It was thicker than the Sanaa manuscript, with probably ca. 300 folios (see F. Déroche, op. cit. [1983], p. 67 and pl. IX). The margins are smaller than in Sanaa, DaM Inv. 00–30.1 and the use of line end fillers is limited. The *scriptio plena* dominates.

the single column and the two-column disposition for the text.[90] The oldest copy with a single column is dated 510–511[91] and from the seventh to the tenth century, it appears almost as often as the two-column disposition.[92] The *ḥijāzī* copies of the Qurʾan opt for the single column, a decision which was of momentous importance for the later Arabic manuscript tradition.

The Late Antique tradition of *scriptio continua* has been taken over by the copyists of the early Qurʾans.[93] It has, however, been adapted to the specificity of the Arabic alphabet: unlike Greek or Latin where the letters are all written one after the other with the same space separating them, be they part of the same word or belonging to two different words, the Arabic letters which are connected within a word are still joined. The difference with the modern approach lies in the fact that when a word consists of two or more segments because one or more of its letters cannot be connected, the space separating the segments will be of the same importance as that which will divide the word from those which precedes and follows it. Actually, in many instances, the space between the segments of a word may even be larger than the space between two separate words. Another feature of this way of writing is the possibility to divide a word at the end of a line when it consists of two segments. The copyists can avail themselves of this option in order to manage more easily the line setting and get a nicer looking left hand alignment. Although they also know the *mashq* technique,[94] that is to say the elongation of some of the horizontal components of the script which may also help in controlling the justification, they use it rather infrequently. In the material I have been examining, I did not find instances of words divided between two pages—between the last line of a verso and the first one of the next recto or between the last line of a recto and the first one of the verso of the same folio.

The scribal practices involved in the transcription of the text deserve a few additional comments. The *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, which involved five

90 See for instance W. Hatch, *An album of dated Syriac manuscripts*, Boston, 1946, pl. XL (MS Milan, Bibl. Ambrosiana No 20, dated 613–614), XLII (MS London, BL Add. 14478, dated 621–622), XLIII (MS Add. 14666, dated 682) and XLV (MS Add. 12134, dated 697).

91 Ibid., p. 13.

92 Ibid.

93 See W. Diem, Untersuchungen zur frühen Geschichte der arabischen Orthographie. IV. Die Schreibung der zusammenhängenden Rede. Zusammenfassung, *Orientalia* NS 52 (1983), pp. 386–387 (§ 242).

94 The word may be understood in various ways; for a recent presentation of the question, see A. Gacek, op. cit., pp. 234–238.

copyists, is not an isolated case. A few contemporary *ḥijāzī* copies written by two hands have been found. In the Sanaa collection, the fragment DaM Inv. 01–25.1 has been transcribed by two copyists who are easily recognisable through the specificities of each hand and the distinct kinds of verse dividers.[95] In her paper on the manuscript Or. 2165, Rabb made a few interesting comments on the script and suggested to identify two hands involved in the transcription of the text, one being the main copyist, while the other one was in charge of only five folios.[96] A fragment from Fustat—now in the National Library of Russia in Saint Petersburg—Marcel 17, seems to be the result of the cooperation of three copyists. In this case, the organisation of the work is less rigorous than in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, as some changes of hand occur between the verso of a folio and the recto of the next one. A few folios formerly in the Umayyad mosque in Damascus and now kept in Istanbul were also transcribed by two copyists whose script and verse dividers are obviously different. The same situation seems to exist in the oblong fragment, Kairouan, Musée des arts islamiques, R 119. With the exception of Or. 2165, the number of folios of these early witnesses is too small to allow a relevant analysis of the orthography which would identify the options the various scribes took in this matter—if any. In the case of Or. 2165, the disproportionate amount of evidence between the two copyists makes such an analysis pointless. However, the visual components, script and verse dividers, manifest plainly in all the cases the identity of each of the contributors.

An accurate evaluation of the importance of this procedure within the handwritten production of the beginnings of Islam still eludes us. The identification of such collaborations relies entirely on the physical vicinity of two scripts in one of the surviving fragments of a manuscript, in other words on the discovery of either a folio with a recto by one hand and the verso by another or a bifolio with a different hand on each folio. Unless such evidence surfaces, two fragments with a different hand on each of them but actually originating from the same manuscript may be considered as two different copies. However, in spite of this caveat and of the small number of fragments in the *ḥijāzī* style of script that has been preserved, the comparatively elevated number of instances of team-work shows that it was common practice at the time. Why was it so? The text of the Qur'an is not of such a considerable size, like the Bible, that it would be better to divide the transcription work between various copyists in order to

95 See *Maṣāḥif Ṣanʿāʾ*, op. cit., pp. 60–61, no 3; U. Dreibholz, *Frühe Koranfragmente aus der Großen Moschee in Sanaa. Early Quran fragments from the Great mosque in Sanaa*, Sanaa, 2003, p. 28, no 7; F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), p. 127 and pl. 18–19.

96 I. Rabb, op. cit., p. 98.

finish the copy more rapidly. On the other hand, the copies of the Qurʾan were perhaps much in demand and the people with some writing ability not very numerous. The lack of uniformity in the appearance of the script dominates the production in *ḥijāzī* style, although the three 12-lines-to-the-page oblong fragments indicate some measure of homogenisation.

The common features of the manuscripts which have been analysed should not hide their differences. The various fragments which we suggest to relate to the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, that is to say the first five examples and probably the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I*, tend to present very strong similarities in their page setting. These vertical format codices share the same way of using most of the space available on the page for the transcription of the text, leaving almost no outer margins. I can only stress again that this is not the consequence of repeated trimming operations which would have resulted in the disappearance of the margins. In many instances when the natural edge of the parchment has not been eliminated when the sheet was cut into bifolios, the text stops in close contact with it. This was clearly not a way of sparing the costly material since the size of the lines, at least in the quarto copies which have been discussed previously, could have been reduced without losing legibility. Actually, the letters are of fair size and the words are rather generously spaced. This layout cannot be traced back to other manuscript traditions of this area, margins being a common feature of their books. The lack of margins is obviously the result of a decision, the rationale of which eludes us. Two oblong fragments, Istanbul, TIEM, ŞE 9052 and 12827/1, could reflect the same position.

On the other hand, the group of vertical copies of the Qurʾan, like Saint Petersburg, NLR Marcel 18/2, with conspicuous margins seems more in agreement with the other manuscript traditions of the region. Did the use of line-end fillers develop within this group of copies in *ḥijāzī* style or was it borrowed from another source? The three 12-lines-to-the-page oblong fragments indicate a kind of intermediary position: the margins are small and their copyists apparently ignore the line-end fillers.

The number of lines to the page within the same manuscript is far from invariable. It is actually quite common to have variations from one folio to the next, even if a frame had previously ruled the page. However, there is a tendency in favour of around 25 lines to the page, not only in the larger quarto copies, but also in the smaller vertical Qurʾanic copies—although the number of lines to the page may in some cases be lower. The oblong copies are a clear exception to this trend, although the 12-lines-to-the-page copies might be understood as "half" of this number.

There is likewise an evolution in the way in which the beginning and/or end of the suras are singled out. In the first examples, they are separated from

each other by a blank space, usually a full line but sometimes only the end of the last line of the sura. The titles found in those copies were added later, with the exception of the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* and the oblong fragment Istanbul, TIEM, ŞE 12827/1 (fig. 16). A difference appears between the larger copies which do not include any decorative device at all between the suras, and the smaller ones with a crude divider in black ink; in the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I*, the suras are also separated, at least in a few cases, by an ornamental band.[97] In two of the copies with margins, Saint Petersburg, NLR, Marcel 19 (fig. 9) and Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 56, an ornamental device separates the suras. In the former, the colourful sura headbands are probably an addition. Another procedure is to punctuate in a specific and usually more emphatic way the end of the last verse of a sura.

Turning to the text itself, one notes that the verses are quite coherently indicated, usually by clusters of dots organised according to various schemes that required a few seconds in their implementation—a fact I suggest to understand as a measure in favour of some control. The groups of tens are not identified as such, or only by later hands. The division of the text into verses is especially relevant in the study of the *qirāʾāt*. As Rabb underlined in her study of Or. 2165, it is certainly through this aspect that we can perceive the existence of various readings:

> Compared to a much smaller number of major orthographical variants, the large amount of variants in this area makes them a better gauge for assessing the variant reading tradition of this manuscript.[98]

Although the size of the fragments usually precludes any serious analysis of the orientation of a manuscript in this field, there is enough evidence to show that the systems of the various schools as they were later known were either not yet fixed or coexisting with other systems, preserved in the manuscripts, but later completely forgotten. The occurrence in Saint Petersburg, NLR Marcel 9 of a "short verse" identical with one of those found in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* strengthens the idea that they are by no means a scribal mistake and that they deserve further investigation. The *basmala* is usually marked as a verse.

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97 See also Sanaa, DaM 00–29.1 (*Maṣāḥif Ṣanʿāʾ*, op. cit., p. 58, no 11; H.-C. von Bothmer, Frühislamische Koran-Illuminationen: Meisterwerke aus dem Handschriftenfund der Großen Moschee in Sanaa/Yemen, *Kunst und Antiquitäten* (1986/1), p. 27, fig. 3).

98 I. Rabb, op. cit., p. 87.

The orthography is one of the features which may help us in establishing the chronology of the manuscripts, but also in understanding the history of the text itself. The copyists did not content themselves with a mere transcription of an original; they enhanced the *rasm* and eliminated the ambiguity between *kāna* and *kun*, but not between *qāla* and *qul*. The few manuscripts which I analysed here show that an evolution was under way. When going through them, one notes the difference between the first group of textual witnesses and the materially more developed copies like Saint Petersburg, NLR Marcel 18/2 or 9. What do we know of the actual process of orthographic improvement? The *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* provides us with arguments for stating that it was still largely a matter of personal choice—as was the case for the script.[99] In this copy, the *repentir* of Hand B in 7: 146 and 148 shows an almost live process of orthographic enhancement which was probably a common procedure at that time when the transcription was based on some older and more defective exemplar. The copyists were entrusted with the changes which had to be brought to the text or which they thought fit to make—to its orthography, but also probably to its division into verses. In many copies in *scriptio defectiva*, the orthography was modified by later readers who added for instance the *alif* after the *qāf* in *qāla*. However, the evolution was not a continuous progress and the manuscript Dublin CBL Is 1615 demonstrates that some readers clung to the "old" orthography.[100] In this case, the copyist(s) had written *shay'* in the "modern" orthography, leaving only in a few cases the form with an *alif*.[101] A reader corrected the text and added an *alif* in most of the cases.[102] Conversely, he corrected *qāla* and *qālū* when the copyist(s) had used the *scriptio defectiva*.[103]

The Muslim tradition only records the addition of letters to the *rasm* during this process,[104] but suppressions were also the rule as can be seen with two of

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99 See F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), pp. 54–59.

100 The manuscript contains thirty-six parchment folios (36,3 × 29 cm; writing surface: 28,3–30 × 26 cm) arranged in quaternions with sides of same nature facing each other according to Gregory's rule. The script is not *ḥijāzī* and is probably from the second/eighth century. The text covers 28: 6 to 48: 24 (f. 1–32) and 85: 3 to 110: 1 (f. 33–36). See A.J. Arberry, *The Koran illuminated. A handlist of the Korans in the Chester Beatty Library*, Dublin, 1967, p. 15, no 40; D. James, *Qur'ans and bindings from the Chester Beatty Library*, London, 1980, p. 14, no 1.

101 The old orthography is original in 29: 42 and 62; 33: 27; 34: 39; 35: 44; 36: 12 and 15.

102 He forgot to correct the word in 29: 12; 32: 7 and 36: 83.

103 For instance on f. 1b, in 28: 27 and 28.

104 Ibn Abī Dā'ūd, *Kitāb al-maṣāḥif* = A. Jeffery, op. cit., p. 117 Arabic. Mālik b. Anas expressed his opposition to this modification (see A. Jahdani, Du *fiqh* à la codicologie. Quelques

the five words that I used in the evaluation of the orthography. This is the case of the *alif* in *shayʾ*, although it is not mentioned as such. Interestingly enough, the common old orthography is explained as a reading of the *rasm* of Ibn Masʿūd's or Ubayy's *muṣḥaf*.[105] The denticle in *bi-āyāt* disappeared unnoticed and the final *alif* in *dhū* gave birth to a reading which was discarded by later authorities: at 5: 95, the early *rasm dhal/wāw/alif*, common in the early manuscripts for *dhū*, was misread as *dhawā*.[106]

The manuscripts also indicate small variations in the ʿUthmanic *rasm*. In addition to what I said about the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, a few further examples found in the copies and fragments examined above were adduced in support of this observation. In addition to them, I shall add two instances found in the two fragments Paris, BnF Arabe 328 c and Arabe 6140 a which can be related on the same grounds to the group of *ḥijāzī* copies.[107] These variants are typologically close to some of those, which are said by the tradition to be characteristic of the *maṣāḥif al-amṣār*, for instance *law* instead of *wa-law* or *alladhīna* instead of *wa-alladhīna*.[108] The typology of a quarter of the canonical variants is similar, for instance the Syrian reading *qālū* instead of *wa-qālū* (2: 116) or the Medinan and Syrian *alladhīna* instead of *wa-alladhīna* (9: 107). As the lists of variants also include cases in which *qāla* is a reading against *qul* (17: 93; 21: 4; 23: 112 and 114),[109] one wonders whether these lists reflect a later stage of transmission, when the orthographic difference between *qāla* and *qul* was completely established. And it is only the growing use of diacritics which could make the difference in Q 27: 67 between a *hamza* and a *nūn*. The still defective state of the script, with few diacritics and no vowels and orthoepic marks, and

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opinions de Mālik (m. 179/796) sur le Coran-codex, *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 56 (2006) [Actes de la conférence internationale sur les manuscrits du Coran (Bologna, 26–28 septembre 2002)], p. 273).

105 See al-Dānī, *al-Muqniʿ fī maʿrifa marsūm maṣāḥif ahl al-amṣār*, ed. M.A. Dahmān, Damas, s.d., p. 42 (quoted by G. Bergsträsser and O. Pretzl, *Geschichte des Qorâns*, vol. 3, 2nd edition, Leipzig, 1938, p. 49, n. 4 et p. 255, n. 1). However, G. Bergsträsser had already noted, after examining the Lewis-Migana palimpsest, that it was a fairly common orthography (ibid., p. 57).

106 See E. Kohlberg and A. Amir-Moezzi, *Revelation and falsification. The* Kitāb al-qirāʾāt *of Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Sayyārī*, Leiden-Boston, 2009, p. 25 Arabic and pp. 86–87.

107 See F. Déroche, op. cit. (1983), pp. 60–61, n. 4 and 6; id., op. cit. (2009), p. 121, 122, 144 and pl. 14 and 16.

108 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), p. 144.

109 Al-Dānī, op. cit., pp. 108–113; a list derived from this information can be found in G. Bergsträsser and O. Pretzl, op. cit., pp. 11–14.

the old orthography are quite certainly at the root of variant readings. The distinction between what can be a genuine variant and a mistake is especially difficult in the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I*.[110] In contrast, the case of ŞE 13316-1 is in this respect relatively clear, although like the Sanaa palimpsest it raises the issue of possible handwritten transmission outside of the mainstream.

The chronology and the modus operandi of the canonisation process would have to be reconsidered, as well as its relationship with the recitation. The first works devoted to the variants in the ʿUthmanic *rasm* were probably written towards the middle of the second/eighth century.[111] Edmund Beck showed that an evolution occurred in the presentation of the imam or Qurʾanic codex of reference in the various cities: whereas the oldest sources, like al-Farrāʾ, refer to "some of the *maṣāḥif*", the later authors write about "the *muṣḥaf* of such and such place", that is a more abstract presentation.[112] The implication would be that the earlier sources were aware of more local variants than what was later considered as canonical. It may be that some of the variants found in the manuscripts were precisely among these extra variants. With some exceptions, they are usually similar to those which were included in the canonical lists of variants. The testimony of al-Farrāʾ and the situation found in the oldest copies provide us with the vision of a complex situation with many variants circulating in written form.

A research about the introduction of the collation in the transmission of the Qurʾan would contribute to a better understanding of this phase of the history of the text. According to the Islamic tradition, it has been applied since the beginning: as a last step in the writing down of the Qurʾan under ʿUthmān, Zayd b. Thābit compared the text he had compiled with Ḥafṣa's *ṣaḥifa* (*fa-ʿaraḍa al-muṣḥaf ʿalayhā*).[113] Viviane Comerro notes that the insistence on the conformity of the canon with a text miraculously kept or found again is a *topos* encountered in religious literature dealing with the passage from oral to written transmission.[114]

110 See for instance B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, op. cit., p. 49, n. 138; p. 51, n. 144; p. 64, n. 222; p. 69, n. 257; p. 70, n. 271, etc.

111 See E. Beck, Die Kodizesvarianten der Amṣār, *Orientalia* 16 (1947), p. 371.

112 Ibid., p. 354.

113 Tabari, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān ʿan taʾwīl āy al-Qurʾān*, ed. M.M. Shākir and A.M. Shākir, Cairo-Alexandria, 2005, vol. I, p. 81. Jeffery, *Materials*, pp. 156–157. A. Gacek (op. cit., p. 240, n. 64) recalls that "Muslim tradition traces the practice of *muʿaraḍa* back to the Archangel Gabriel who presented the revealed text to Muḥammad and made him recite it back to him." See V. Comerro, op. cit., p. 34 and 36.

114 V. Comerro, op. cit., p. 59.

On the other hand, independently from the specific issue of the verses, the still somewhat fluid state of the text as found in the earliest manuscripts and the variants of the *rasm* attributed to the *maṣāḥif al-amṣār* are hardly compatible with a collation procedure. Theodor Nöldeke did not take into account the couple *qāla*/*qul*—involving a difference which would not escape the attention of the collators when the text was read aloud—in his list of the *rasm* variants.[115] The early copies of the Qur'an which have been examined indicate clearly that the graphic distinction between the two verbal forms began only in a systematic way by the end of the first/seventh century. The *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, although transmitting a text which is certainly not Kufan, has in places like 23: 112 and 114 (where the Kufan reading is *qul* instead of *qāla* as in the other traditions), *qāf*+*lām* which can be read both ways, *qāla* or *qul*. At that moment, neither the Kufan variant nor the majority reading could be effectively recognised in the *rasm*. In the same way, the couple *Allāh*/*li-Llāh* (23: 87 and 89) can hardly remain unnoticed during the collation process.

Were the *qāla*/*qul* variants added to the lists afterwards? There is no reason to think so. Quite the contrary, the lists were compiled once the two forms were differentiated both in oral and written form, at the earliest in middle Umayyad times. This entails that collation probably came into use at about the same moment when the graphic accuracy had made headway and the transmission techniques started developing. The small variants found in the ʿUthmanic *rasm* were detected and this procedure of control over the transmission was incorporated anachronistically into the account about the collection of the Qur'an itself in order to stress the fidelity of the text to its source and its stability. Similarly, the etiological account of the origins of the canonical variants provided a justification for the actual state of the text.

With the important exception of the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I*, the *rasm* found in the handwritten witnesses of that period corresponds to the ʿUthmanic vulgate if we admit that, in spite of the orthographic peculiarities, a lack of most of the required diacritics and of any orthoepic signs, the text the copyists had in mind coincided with the canonical version as we know it today. At the moment of the written transmission, it reflected an archaic state that still included traces of the history of the revelations.[116] The comparison of the various witnesses in *ḥijāzī*

115 Th. Nöldeke, *Geschichte des Qorâns*, Göttingen, 1860, pp. 240–241.

116 See Chapter 1. The "short verses" are a good example of this situation.

style suggests that the corpus was not completely closed and that the "ʿUthmanic" transmission was still running along parallel tracks. By the beginning of the Umayyad period, the relative lack of concern about the use of diacritics evidenced by the manuscripts can be taken as an argument against the historicity of the worries expressed in the traditional account of the origins of ʿUthmān's decision. Moreover, other reports about al-Ḥajjāj's "*Maṣāḥif* project"—to adopt Omar Hamdan's phrase[117]—show that their "introduction" was a move seen as crucial for the clarity and reliability of the text. The later account by al-Dānī about the dotting of initial *yāʾ* and *tāʾ* in verbal forms, although probably being a later rationalisation of the early *maṣāḥif* evolution, also goes in the same direction.[118] The manuscripts tell us another story. Although the copyists were familiar with the diacritics and started using them before al-Ḥajjāj's time, they did not use them in places where they could have made the text easier to read.

Harald Motzki's study of the two traditions which are the basis of the accounts of the writing down of the Qurʾan during ʿUthmān's reign has demonstrated that they were probably circulating by the extreme end of the seventh or early eighth century AD and could at any rate be dated to the first quarter of the second/eighth century.[119] A comparison between the proclaimed aims of the caliph and the state of the written transmission of the text at that moment shows the anachronistic nature of the most "technical" part of the account. The caliph's role may thus have been less far-reaching than the tradition reports, since in the early Umayyad period the manuscripts were unable to safeguard the text and non-canonical variants were still circulating (not to speak of different texts like that of the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* which were in principle eliminated). The caliph may have been involved in the diffusion of a visual identity for the text he supported, eventually paying for the production and diffusion of copies—a move that was essential to safeguard the vulgate.[120] The writing down of the Qurʾan was an important undertaking and the Muslim tradition, although it may disagree on some points, is unanimous in providing the same strong

117 O. Hamdan, op. cit., p. 135.

118 Al-Dānī, *Muḥkam fī naqṭ al-maṣāḥif*, éd. ʿI. Ḥasan, Damas, 1379/1960, p. 2 and 17. See O. Hamdan, op. cit., p. 147.

119 H. Motzki, The collection of the Qurʾān, A reconsideration of Western views in light of recent methodological development, *Der Islam* 78 (2001), pp. 30–31.

120 ʿUthmān's move was imitated by other figures from an early date. According to al-Samhūdī, al-Ḥajjāj would actually have been the first to send codices to the large cities of the empire (*Wafāʾ al-wafāʾ bi-akhbār dār al-Muṣṭafā*, ed. M. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Beirut, 1984, vol. II, p. 668).

argument in favour of recording the Revelation in written form.[121] In spite of the later position which will give the recited Qur'an the first place, in both accounts—the first one about Abū Bakr, the second one about 'Uthmān—a point is clearly made: the written text is the basis of a safe preservation of the revelation. The later science of the *qirā'āt* did actually recognise, albeit in a subdued tone, the importance of the written version of the Qur'an: one of the three basic requirements for the acknowledgement of a reading is its conformity with the 'Uthmanic *rasm*.

The material which can be termed *ḥijāzī* on the basis of al-Nadīm's description covers a variety of situations. A group which can be assembled around the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, disregarding their format, vertical or oblong, corresponds to the earliest period of the manuscript tradition and would probably predate the last quarter of the first century (before ca. 695), under the reign of 'Abd al-Malik. However, copyists trained in this style may have remained active beyond this moment. Some of the manuscripts like the 12-lines-to-the-page oblong fragments are more regular and probably influenced by developments, which will be explored in the next chapter.

121 See the presentation of these accounts in W.M. Watt and R. Bell, *Introduction to the Qur'an*, Edinburgh, 1977, pp. 40–42. Also in V. Comerro, op. cit., pp. 32–36 (Arabic text and French translation).

CHAPTER 3

The Transformation of the *Muṣḥaf*

In his description of the fragment Paris, BnF, Arabe 330, f. 11 to 19, Michele Amari stated that it was written in a "script of the Hidjâz, verging towards the Kufic script"[1] and suggested a date in the third century AH/ninth century AD.[2] When, more than a century later, I was asked to prepare a new catalogue of the Qur'anic manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale, I came across these nine folios, unique of their kind in the Parisian collection, and was in my turn puzzled by their script and illumination. They could obviously not be so late as Amari thought, but there was no parallel, which could help understand their position. In the end, I lumped them with the other fragments, which were eluding my palaeographic classification of the material.[3]

A few years later, while working in Istanbul on the fragments of the Damascus collection, folios written in a style which was exhibiting a close relationship with the script of Arabe 330 c began to surface. Slowly, what had been an isolated and thus hard to define script was turning into a rather homogeneous group from a typological point of view. The final element of the puzzle appeared a little later, at the end of the 1990s, while I was examining the Marcel collection in Saint Petersburg.[4] By then, two manuscripts were providing clues as to the date of this script—one considerably earlier than what Amari had suggested.

Both *muṣḥaf* are in the state of fragments. The first one, which I previously suggested to call the "Umayyad codex of Damascus",[5] consists of seventy-eight

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1 The descriptions prepared by M. Amari were included by W. Mc Guckin de Slane in the *Catalogue des manuscrits arabes*, Paris, 1883–1895, p. 91.

2 Ibid., p. 92.

3 F. Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran: Aux origines de la calligraphie coranique* [Bibliothèque Nationale, Catalogue des manuscrits arabes, 2e partie, Manuscrits musulmans, I/1], Paris, 1983, pp. 143–149, nos 264–280 ("Non classé").

4 O. Vasilyeva, Oriental manuscripts in the National Library of Russia, *Manuscripta Orientalia* 2–2 (June 1996), p. 20; F. Déroche, *La transmission écrite du Coran dans les débuts de l'islam. Le codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, [Texts and studies on the Qur'ān 5] Leiden-Boston, 2009, pp. 8–16.

5 F. Déroche, New evidence about Umayyad book hands, in *Essays in honour of Salāh al-Dīn al-Munajjid* [al-Furqan publication, nº 70], London, 2002, pp. 629–634. As the manuscript is being only tentatively reconstructed, the folio numbers used in this chapter are offered as a provisional reference.

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parchment folios in vertical format scattered among the "Damascus papers" collection in the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum in Istanbul. The manuscript was kept for a long time in a deposit for worn out manuscripts in the Umayyad mosque in Damascus, before it was transferred to Istanbul at the end of the Ottoman empire. Once the task of recovering the *membra disiecta* among the thousands of fragments was finished, the folios were brought together under the provisional shelf number TIEM ŞE 321 (fig. 19–24). By contrast, the other copy is kept in two collections under four different call numbers: Saint Petersburg, NLR Marcel 11, 13 and 15 and Paris, BNF Arabe 330 c. Together, they constitute the "Umayyad codex of Fustat" (fig. 25): sixty-four of its seventy-three parchment folios are kept in Saint Petersburg, whilst the remaining nine are in Paris.[6] They were once all in the deposit of the ʿAmr mosque in Fustat and reached Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[7] In both cases, two elements were particularly relevant for the history of the book during the Umayyad period: the illuminations—to which I shall turn in a moment—which became a major argument for the dating of these copies and the script which revealed a new chapter in the history of the Arabic script.

As for the structure of these parchment manuscripts, there are a few differences between the Fustat and Damascus codices. Both are vertical Qurʾanic copies, as most of the manuscripts in *ḥijāzī* style discussed previously. The former is larger than the latter and its 37 × 31 cm folios are closer in size to those of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* (33 × 24 cm). The height of the Damascus codex was slightly over 24 cm (the folios' dimensions now range from 22,8 to 24,2 cm), its width being slightly over 19,5 mm (from 18,6 to 19,7 cm). Its quires are unfortunately not complete, but might be tentatively reconstructed on the basis of the material at hand: we can conclude with reasonable certainty that

6 F. Déroche, op. cit. (1983), pp. 144–145, no 268; id., Colonnes, vases et rinceaux. Sur quelques enluminures d'époque omeyyade, *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Comptes rendus des séances de l'année 2004* [2006], pp. 227–264; A. George, *The rise of Islamic calligraphy*, London, 2010, pp. 75–78 and fig. 50–51. I was initially reluctant to consider Arabe 330 c as a part of the Umayyad codex of Fustat. The style of the illuminations on the Parisian portion of the manuscript, different from those in Saint Petersburg, was my main argument in support of this view. However, both its material characteristics and the text itself (its last folio ends with the last word of 17: 59, whereas the first folio in the Saint Petersburg collection begins with the first word of 17: 60, coming after the verse separator) compel me to revise my initial opinion. In the references to the folios of this manuscript, a letter indicating the place of conservation, Paris (P) or Saint Petersburg (M), will appear before the folio number, e.g. 'f. M 34a'.

7 The history of this collection is summed up in F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), pp. 7–16.

they were usually made of ten bifolios, definitively a rare structure of quire in the Islamic tradition.[8] The Fustat codex on the other hand is homogeneous as far as its quire structure is concerned (five bifolios).[9] An estimate of the number of folios (ca. 250) and of the quantity of parchment required for the production of this copy led me to estimate that 28 square meters had been used, more than the earlier *ḥijāzī* copies of the first group.

The Fustat codex has 25 lines of text to the page (writing surface: 27,5 × 23,5 cm). The average height of a line (11,5 mm) is slightly inferior to that of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* (roughly 15 mm), but close to the Damascus codex (between 10,5 and 11,5 mm, mostly 11 mm). The transcription of the latter's text has been carefully prepared, as indicated by the ruling with a dry point, consisting of an incomplete frame with two vertical lines and a horizontal one. However, the number of lines varies from 18 to 21, although their height remains relatively constant as we have seen before. The written surface varies accordingly from 19,6 to 21 × 16 to 16,7 cm.

The text found in the Damascus codex covers suras 17 to 54, with many lacunae.[10] However, since two places corresponding to a *juzʾ* division are part of the manuscript (beginning of *j.* 16 and 23), the first being also one of the places where the middle of the Qurʾanic text is located, and since the beginning of the sixth part of the division into seven sections (sura 34: 20) is found on one of the surviving fragments, we can exclude that the manuscript was a copy in two, four, seven or thirty volumes. The possibility of another kind of division cannot be excluded, but it seems unlikely; the manuscript was probably a Qurʾan in one volume. The same conclusion can be reached more easily about the Fustat codex: with three main portions of text covering 17: 60 to 23: 12, 25: 16 to 27: 89 and 30: 3 to 41: 32,[11] divisions into two, three, four, six or seven volumes are excluded—as well as a division into thirty *juzʾ*.

In sharp contrast with most of the copies of the Qurʾan in *ḥijāzī* style discussed previously, the short vowels are partially indicated with red dots. These were added after the transcription of the text had been completed, but we do not have any clues about the time which elapsed between the two operations.

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8 Three quires can be reconstructed as follows:
I-2 *lost ff.*/ 24/25/26/27/28/29/30/31 + 32/33/34/35/36/37/38/39/2 *lost ff.*
II-40/41/42/43/44/45/46/47/48/49 + 50/51/52/53/54/55/56/57/2 *lost ff.*
III-2 *lost ff.*/58/59/60/61/62/63/64/65 + 66/67/68/69/70/71/72/73/2 *lost ff.*

9 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2006), p. 237, Table I.

10 See Annex I.

11 For the extent of Qurʾanic text preserved in this manuscript, see F. Déroche, op. cit. (2006), pp. 236–237 and Annex I.

Were the dots added immediately afterwards or were they a later addition? In the case of the diacriticals, the Damascus codex exhibits two kinds of dots, one which is contemporary with the script itself, the other one being added at a later stage.

The usual stroke of the Umayyad codex of Damascus is ca. 2 mm wide, and the tip of the *qalam* appears to be only slightly concave on its lower side. The endings are never underscored by a widening of the stroke. As a whole, the script looks slightly heavier than *ḥijāzī* as written by Hand A of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*;[12] but Hand D of the latter[13] or other *ḥijāzī* fragments like Or. 2165[14] are rather close to both manuscripts in terms of the relation between the height of the shafts, the width of the stroke and its neatness. The letters are spread over the page either by regularly spacing the letters which are not connected—be they part of the same word or not—in a transposition of the principles of Late Antique *scriptio continua* to the Arabic script,[15] or by the use of *mashq*—the horizontal elongation of some letters or connection between letters.[16] It is however more irregularly used in the Damascus codex than in the Fustat codex. Letters with horizontal components—like the final *bāʾ*, the *ṣād*, the *ṭāʾ* or the *kāf* especially final—may also be extended, but others like *dāl*, which might also be subjected to this, are not significantly elongated. In the word Allah, the two *lām*s are set widely apart from one another, a solution that derives from prototypes in *ḥijāzī* style (fig. 7, 9, 10, 15 and 16), but may have been enhanced by the copyist in order to convey the impression of a solemn progression of the script on the line. On both sides of f. 74 of the Damascus codex, the copyist decided to have only the end of sura 46 and the illumination of the following sura: the reasons for this choice are not clear, but he had to make the best use of the few words left and the line could in some cases have

12 Ibid., pp. 31–34 and pl. 1–2. On the issue of the writing tools used, see the remarks of A. George (op. cit., p. 50).

13 Ibid., pp. 39–41 and pl. 7–8.

14 See the facsimile published by F. Déroche and S. Noja Noseda, *Le manuscrit Or. 2165 (f. 1 à 61) de la British Library* [Sources de la transmission manuscrite du texte coranique, I: Les manuscrits de style higâzî], Lesa, 2001.

15 See ch. 1.

16 The word may be understood in various ways; for a recent presentation of the question, see A. Gacek, The copying and handling of Qurʾāns: Some observations on the *Kitāb al-Maṣāḥif* by Ibn Abī Dāʾūd al-Sijistānī, *Mélange de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 59 (2006) [Actes de la conférence internationale sur les manuscrits du Coran (Bologne, 26–28 septembre 2002)], pp. 234–238.

eight characters only (f. 74a, l. 13 for instance). Although both manuscripts are globally very close, it should be noted that the script of the Fustat codex is the most homogeneous one. One cannot exclude that the small discrepancies in the shape of the letters, the number of lines to the page or in the global appearance of the script of the Damascus codex are the result of team-work.[17] This would after all be only another example of this kind of organisation of the work.[18] However, and this is actually a significant difference with what can be observed in some of the manuscripts in *ḥijāzī* style, there is some coherence in the appearance of the script from the beginning of the copy to its end, but also between the manuscripts.

In both copies, the shaft of the *alif* is usually vertical, although in some instances one can find *alif*s of an almost *ḥijāzī* appearance. This also applies to the shafts of the *ṭā'* and final *kāf*. The lower return of the letter is short and the upper end of the shaft is bevelled—as is the case of the shaft of other letters. The *qāf*—as isolated or final letter—has a noticeably important down-falling tail which interferes somewhat with the line of text below. One of the most interesting letters is certainly the final or isolated *kāf*. Its very developed lower horizontal stroke is a noticeable feature of our manuscript: when the opportunity arises, it may be substantially lengthened. The upper horizontal stroke is strictly parallel to the lower one; at its extremity on the left, at a point located before the middle of the lower stroke, a vertical shaft surges from it. The letter is a good example of the evolution from the *ḥijāzī* forerunner to a more regular and solemn shape.

Another typical letterform is that of the *mīm* at the end of a word. One can clearly see it in the *basmala*: it looks like a semibreve set on the line; on the left side, there is usually no trace of a tail—as one would expect—but the shape is carefully rounded. The "eye" of the *mīm* is clearly visible. The letter cannot be confused with the *tā' marbuṭa*, which keeps the short rectilinear stroke of the *hā'* on its right side. It should be added that *mīm*s with a horizontal tail are sometimes used by the copyist(s) of the Damascus codex, but this seems not very frequent. Later, users who were obviously disturbed by this shape have sometimes added a tail to those final *mīm*s.

The final *nūn* retained some of the features of the *ḥijāzī nūn* as it appears for instance on the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* or BNF Arabe 6140a.[19] But a

17 The far more homogeneous appearance of the script in the Fustat codex does not preclude that various copyists might have been working together.

18 See ch. 1 and 2.

19 F. Déroche, op. cit. (1983), p. 61, no 6; id., op. cit. (2009), pl. 16.

technical change (the use of another *qalam* or of another way of cutting the tip of the reed or of handling the tool) gives the scribe the opportunity to stress the contrast between the two halves of the crescent and the point where they are connected. The sickle shaped letter opens more or less widely; the upper part is in some cases almost vertical, but it is more commonly oblique.

As noted by Amari, this script (which I propose to call "O I") retains something of its *ḥijāzī* origins.[20] As indicated previously, Hand D of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* can be seen as a forerunner.[21] It is still a little hesitant and some of the letter shapes, the *hāʾ* for instance, are very different from those of the new Umayyad script. What is more interesting is the relationship between the script of the Qurʾanic manuscripts and some of the Umayyad inscriptions, notably ʿAbd al-Malik's milestones: "[their] writing as a whole echoes manuscript calligraphy."[22] The isolated or final *qāf* is almost identical with that found on stone and the same can be said of the final *kāf* in the caliph's name on three of the milestones;[23] to these comparative examples can be added the shape of the *kāf* found on two of the inscriptions on the Dome of the Rock, that in mosaic and another one on a copper plate at the northern entrance of the building.[24] Alain George has suggested to identify in all these inscriptions the use of a grid defining the size of the various letters and of their constitutive parts.[25]

Although it was not possible to submit both manuscripts to an exhaustive examination of their orthography, some sample material will allow us to get an idea of their position, following the same method as previously. The *scriptio defectiva*, mainly characterised by the omission of notation for /*ā*/, is still used in both copies. On the other hand, changes appear and the *scriptio plena* is gaining ground. In the Damascus codex, *qāla* and *qālū* are still written defectively, although they may coexist—sometimes on the same page—with the

20 In principle, the next letter currently available in the typology is "G". However, since other groups (*ḥijāzī* and NS) do not comply with the sequence, I decided for mnemonic reasons to choose the letter "O" (for "Omeyyade") for the new group.

21 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), pp. 39–41 and pl. 7–8.

22 A. George, op. cit., p. 69. For a comparison between the script of Saint Petersburg, NLR Marcel 13 and ʿAbd al-Malik's inscriptions, see F. Déroche, op. cit. (2006), pp. 231–234 and fig. 2.

23 M. van Berchem, *Matériaux pour un* Corpus inscriptionum arabicarum, 2nd part, *Syrie du Sud, Jérusalem "ville"*, I, Cairo, 1922, pp. 17–29; F. Déroche, ibid.

24 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2006), pp. 232–234.

25 A. George, op. cit., pp. 56–74.

scriptio plena. On f. 41a for instance, the copyist wrote on l. 5 *qālū* (34: 22), then *q(ā)la* (ibid.) and on the next line *q(ā)lū* (ibid.); on the verso, on l. 5, we find *qāla* (34: 32), then *q(ā)la* on l. 7 (34: 33) and again the *scriptio plena* on l. 14 and 15 (34: 34 and 35). A survey of part of the Fustat codex shows that *qāla* is written most of the time (88%) in the *scriptio plena*, whereas *qālū* is written conversely without medial *alif* in 80 percent of the occurrences. In the first sequence of the fragment preserved in Saint Petersburg, the *fāʿil* and the *fiʿāl* do not appear to be treated in the same way by the copyist(s): /ā/ is not indicated by an *alif* in about 25 percent of the former and slightly more than 10 percent of the latter. However, it should be noted that the indefinite direct case ending represents only 20 percent of the *fāʿil* against almost 60 percent of the *fiʿāl*.

Following with the cases involving the notation of /ā/ with *alif*, the words *ʿadhāb* and *ʿibād* evince a contrasting approach in the Damascus codex. Keeping to the defective orthography, the plural *ʿibād* is written without *alif* (see for instance 34: 13, 38: 83, 40: 85, etc.), whereas the word *ʿadhāb* reveals an almost complete transition to the *scriptio plena*: all its occurrences are written in this way, with the exception of *ʿadh(ā)b*^{an} (48: 16, f. 77b), the indefinite accusative case which is written without the medial *alif*. The Fustat codex agrees on this last point with the Damascus copy, *ʿadhāb* being clearly written with an *alif*. On the other hand, its copyist(s) hesitated about *ʿibād*: it is almost equally written in *scriptio defectiva* as in *plena*. The case of *āya* is quite specific: it only concerns the "three denticles" orthography of *bi-āyāt*. It is found in both manuscripts, in the Damascus codex at 45: 11 (f. 73b, l. 6) and in the other copy in various places (see for instance 39: 63, 40: 23 and 63).

The word *shayʾ* exemplifies an intermediary situation in the Damascus codex: its "old" orthography—with an *alif* following the *shīn*—is frequently found, as is the case in 33: 52 and 54 (f. 39b), but the "modern" version occurs on f. 40b (34: 16 and 17), for instance. The situation in the Fustat codex is somewhat different: the word is almost always written with the *alif* (94%)—although a careful hand erased it later.

As a rule, recording the /ā/ and the *hamza* remains a thorny issue in the Damascus codex. The former does not seem to be indicated in the case of the feminine plural ending *-āt*, for instance in *āyāt* which contrasts with *bi-āyāt* mentioned above, but with the notable exception of *jannāt*. A few words—feminine with *tāʾ marbūṭa* excluded—are exhibiting a possible alternation between the *scriptio plena*, used in most of the cases, and the *scriptio defectiva* preferred when the word is indefinite in the accusative case (ending with *tanwīn -an*). This may be the case for *ʿadhāb*/*ʿadh(ā)b*^{an} or for *Qurʾān*, written with an *alif* (20: 114), against *Qur(ā)n*^{an}, without *alif* (20: 113; 41: 3). For other words,

like *dhukr*(*ā*)*n*^{an} (42: 50), only one situation has been found, but they may also follow the same pattern.

In the conjugation, the peculiarities found in the Damascus codex are related to the orthography, especially in the case of verbs with a weak root, as is the case with *qāla* (see above), or derived verbs like *art*(*ā*)*ba* (24: 50). In addition to this, it should be noted that the third person of the plural of the perfective of *raʾā* (*raʾū*) is written without the *alif al-wiqāya* (40: 85; 42: 44), a situation which may also concern the verbs with third weak. A puzzling feature of the manuscript, perhaps a mistake, is the orthography of *Dāwūd* (34: 10 and 13) which was already present in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* (4: 163).

Both manuscripts stick to the Arabic adaptation of the *scriptio continua* which is found in the earlier *muṣḥaf*s in *ḥijāzī* style. However, the lay out follows an orientation described in the previous chapter. The Fustat codex has three large outer margins—a feature which explains why the size of the line is smaller than in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* although their folio size is almost identical. In the Damascus codex, the margins are not as generous as in the Fustat copy, but they are clearly larger than those of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* and the first generation of *muṣḥaf*s in *ḥijāzī* style.[26] It might be due either to the destination of the copy or to the status and the means of the patron. It is however a copy of relatively high quality.

The copyist(s) of these manuscripts also used the line-end fillers which we have seen in the second group of *ḥijāzī maṣāḥif* in vertical format.[27] They look like horizontal strokes and are found principally at the end of lines which the script failed to fill up to the theoretical vertical line which limits the writing surface to the left. With these horizontal strokes, the left hand side of the text block would appear as vertical, thus providing a more satisfactory rectangular appearance for the justification. The copyist(s) of the Damascus codex used these devices rather conservatively, whereas the copyist(s) of the Fustat codex eventually used them in other parts of the line, when they had to cope with a descender—usually the tail of a *qāf* or of an *ʿayn* written on the previous line—interfering with the line below. If there was no space to accommodate a word before this obstacle, the copyist(s) may use a similar filler in order to avoid leaving a too conspicuous blank space.

Illumination is certainly what most distinguishes both manuscripts and the first group of quarto copies written in *ḥijāzī* style. Neither the *Codex Parisino-*

26 See ch. 1.

27 See ch. 2.

petropolitanus, nor the manuscript London, BL Or. 2165 contain ornamented headbands between the suras.[28] Those present on Saint Petersburg, NLR Marcel 19 are probably an addition. In the Damascus codex, the illumination is limited to the twenty sura headings that survived which I shall present with those of the Fustat codex. The verse-dividers can hardly be considered as illumination: short strokes written in the same ink as the text itself and grouped in various fashions have been used to indicate the end of each verse; they happen to be organised as a column (1.1.1, mostly with five or six strokes), or as a triangle (1.1.5, with six strokes).[29] The groups of ten verses are singled out by an approximately circular shape, also in ink (1.A.I); but these crude ten-verse dividers are an addition. In the present state of the research on this manuscript, it is not possible to provide a complete overview of the division into verses and relate it to any school. We can nevertheless note that they are thoroughly indicated in the folios available for examination and that the *basmala* is marked as a verse.

The verses are in this case again coherently indicated in the Fustat codex with columns of dashes set one above the other. The groups of verses are indicated in two ways which do not overlap. Rough concentric circles in red and black indicating groups of ten verses are most frequently used in the manuscript in its present state, but in some places the groups of five and ten verses are marked off by *abjad* letters in gold. "Twenty-five" will for example be written *kāf+hāʾ*. From hundred onwards, the *qāf* (value= 100) is always added, but remains independent, so that "125" will be written: *fāʾ+hāʾ* (joined), *qāf*. If compared with the data compiled by Anton Spitaler,[30] some similarities can be found between the manuscript and the Syrian reading. In the thorny case of sura 20, a few divisions seem more in accordance with *ḥijāzī* readings, although as a whole a preference for Damascus is visible.

All the early copies as well as the Damascus and Fustat codices share a common characteristic: they lack any indication of a title—at least in their original state.[31] Crude sura dividers and sometimes a title are found on the

28 See the facsimiles of both manuscripts (F. Déroche and S. Noja Noseda, *Le manuscrit Arabe 328 (a) de la Bibliothèque nationale de France* [Sources de la transmission manuscrite du texte coranique I, Les manuscrits de style hijâzî, 1], Lesa, 1998; id., op. cit. [2001]).

29 See the typology of verse dividers in F. Déroche, op. cit. (1983), pp. 27–28.

30 A. Spitaler, *Die Verszählung des Koran nach islamischer Überlieferung*, Munich, 1935 [Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Abteilung, Jahrgang 1935, Heft 11].

31 Titles have been added in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* and in Or. 2165. The sura headings of the Damascus codex do not contain information about the text (title of the sura,

smaller *muṣḥaf*s as well as on the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* (fig. 10, 12 and 16). In all extant instances in the Damascus and Fustat codices, the space left between the suras is the equivalent of at least two lines of text. On this point, both manuscripts differ from earlier Qur'anic copies in which the copyist did not always leave a full blank line between two suras when a significant part of the preceding sura's last line had not been used for the text. In most cases, the copyists of the Damascus and Fustat codices tended to occupy most of the last line with text when they reached this point. However, when they left the last line partly blank, the illuminators never tried to cover all the space available—in contrast with what can be observed later.

In both manuscripts, the quality or even the presence of illumination is quite irregular. The Fustat codex as we know it today contains twenty-one beginnings of a sura.[32] From those, only twelve are provided with an illumination. The situation is to some extent similar to that of the groups of verses, as we have seen above, without any clear distribution pattern which would account for the presence or absence of ornament. There seems however to be a connection between the quire structure of the manuscript and the illuminated sura headbands, as if the illuminator had been working on loose quires, which would explain why three quires are almost completely decorated, two do not have any ornament at all and one is partly illuminated. Moreover, two illuminations are actually preparatory drawings which never received paint or gilding. The situation is different in the case of the Damascus codex: all the spaces between two suras have been decorated, but there are huge variations in their quality which ranges from crude to sophisticated. As in the codex of Fustat, it is difficult to find a satisfactory explanation for their distribution within the manuscript since it does not seem to be related in any way to a material feature, like the quires, nor to a possible division of the work between two illuminators, for instance. The palette is based on four components: gold, dark red, light blue and green, varying in the codex of Damascus from a darker hue to a lighter one. Unpainted parchment has been used instead of white—notably between coloured stripes.

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number of verses, e.g.); when some information appears in the case of s. 33, it has been written afterwards in red outside the frame of the illumination. The same can be said of the Fustat codex: the structure of the illuminations itself makes clear that it was not meant to receive a title. Later, someone added below the old formula: *fātiḥatu al-sūra* … followed by the title and the number of the verses. For convenience sake, I shall only refer to the sura which begins after the illumination, although we do not know whether it was originally meant as an initial or final ornament.

32 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2006), p. 241, Table III.

The sura ornaments of the two manuscripts can be allotted to two broad groups based on a purely formal feature, the frame. The first one comprises the decorative headbands with a roughly rectangular shape, with long straight sides; the frame itself can be clearly indicated by a coloured line, but this is not always the case. The short sides are treated in a variety of ways, but they only rarely include an element extending into the margin. The other group includes all compositions which are not physically inscribed within a frame and develop freely between the two suras. As a rule, the illumination is contained within a theoretical rectangle, the long sides of which are the horizontal of the upper line of script and that of the line left empty for the heading, whereas the short vertical sides are defined by the vertical limits of the justification. It should be noted that no component of the illumination significantly encroaches on the margins. At most, a small tip of the ornament extends into the margin.

The repertoire of illuminations relies on various sources: geometric and vegetal shapes, architectural as well as some specific Umayyad ornaments. In many instances, the same component is repeated various times across the line. Among the surviving examples, the framed sura headbands are more frequently associated with compositions based on geometric shapes than other ornaments. Concentric circles are arranged in a single row in the Fustat codex, between sura 15 and 16 (f. P 12b), with green leaves arranged in a X-shape separating the circles, and in the Damascus codex (f. 35a, sura 33), with three-step crenellations arranged face-to-face along the long sides and between the circles. The centre of the circles is painted alternately in green, red or blue; in the Fustat codex, the outer circle is gilded. In the latter manuscript, another headband contains half-circles set against the long sides. Both frames have concave short sides. A combination of both compositions appears in an illumination with rosettes instead of circles which will be discussed below. There seems to be a relationship between the use of circular ornaments on a white background in framed headbands and what Daniel Schlumberger described as the third type in the painted decoration of Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī.[33] On f. 50a (sura 37) of the Damascus codex, the frame with concave short sides contains half circles arranged quincuncially in a way, with their diameter in contact with the long sides.

A very simple rope pattern with two components—one is green, the other has been left unpainted—runs across a red rectangular band in the Damascus

33 D. Schlumberger, *Qasr el-Heir el Gharbi*, Contributions de M. Ecochard et N. Saliby, Mise au point par O. Ecochard et A. Schlumberger [Bibliothèque archéologique et historique, CXX], Paris, 1986, p. 14.

codex (f. 71a, sura 44); the rope coils up around small gilt dots. Its only surviving small side is slightly curved, the corners being rounded as well. In the axis of the illumination, a spear-like element surges from the last loop of the rope and is projected toward the margin.

In the same manuscript (f. 76a, sura 48), a frame ending on both extremities with a triangle crowned by a pearl and set between two hooks is among the few examples of sura headbands encroaching upon the margin. The inner space is filled with a row of green, red and yellow (gold?) chevrons.

To the group of sura illuminations enclosed with a frame, I shall add three items from the Fustat codex. Their ornamentation does not rely on geometric shapes strictly speaking. As it often happens, the frame is filled by the repetition (from seven to twelve times) of a compartment filled by various elements: between sura 16 and 17, it has the form of a horizontally oriented diamond with a heart shape occupying its right half and a small spearhead-like leaf on the other half; on f. M 9a (sura 20), that of an oblong hexagon with a central ornament; on f. M 29b (sura 35), that of a mandorla with a central ornament related to the previous one, alternating with a cross-shaped device consisting of two hearts in contact by their tip and two spearhead leaves in contact by their base.[34] Another illumination from the same manuscript, on f. M 20b (sura 40), can be related to this group, but I shall turn to it later.

Turning now to the illuminations which are not contained within a frame, both manuscripts exhibit a similar composition of alternating geometric shapes (circles, squares, diamonds) in a row, the Damascus codex on f. 13b (sura 20) and the Fustat on f. M 34a (sura 37). The latter is only a preparatory drawing, whereas in the former colours are used for the frames of the individual figures and as a background for their inner decoration. This very simple composition is frequently attested in Umayyad times as a frame on the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock[35] as well as on stucco *claustra* at Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī.[36]

A horizontal row of small squares alternately coloured in green, red, blue or gold, set on a corner like diamonds and connected by tiny rings is found on f. 61b (sura 42) of the Damascus codex. Two heart shapes take place symmetrically on both sides of each ring, between the squares, their points in contact with the ring; at the opposite, a point surges from between the two lobes. The

34 Compare with a stucco decoration from Qaṣr al-Hayr al-Gharbī (D. Schlumberger, op. cit., pl. 65a).

35 O. Grabar and S. Nuseibeh, *The Dome of the Rock*, New York, 1996, pp. 103–104 for instance.

36 D. Schlumberger, op. cit., pl. 78c. See also R.W. Hamilton, *Khirbat al Mafjar, An Arabian mansion in the Jordan valley*, Oxford, 1959, fig. 225 f.

illumination changes slightly when it reaches the edge of the justification: a horizontally set heart shape replaces the square and combines with the two vertical heart shapes. As in the previously described illumination, the colours of the various components are alternately green, red, blue or gold. To the group of sura headbands without frame belong two examples from the same copy which rely on a zigzag. On f. 73a (sura 45), a single gilt zigzag line, with a heart shape at each angle, connects the two margins. Three coloured zigzags, a red between two green ones, are separating sura 30 from sura 31 (f. 31a).

Vegetal components, more or less stylised, are used in variable proportion in the two manuscripts, either within a frame or not. In the Fustat codex, they are pervasive, although often assuming a minor role. In two instances, the full width of the justification is covered by an ornament which relies primarily on them. On f. M 6a (sura 19), a series of cornucopiae with stripped body grows out of a vase with a double body, a neck and two almost kantharos-like handles. From the mouth of each cornucopia grows a twig supporting grapes and leaves of various shapes. The last scroll slightly encroaches on the margin. The illumination found on f. M 32a (sura 36) is not unlike the former one in its overall appearance, but a gilded twig describing seventeen loops with a flower in their centre replaces the cornucopiae. Leaves and grapes grow from the twig towards the outside, between the loops.[37]

A composition recalling that found on f. 50a (sura 37) in the Damascus codex may be mentioned here, although its geometric aspect should not be neglected. On f. M 13a (sura 21) in the Fustat codex, a gilded frame contains three quincuncially ordered rows of rosettes with alternating red and green petals separated by white lines. Only the rosettes of the central row are complete, those of the two other rows being half rosettes in contact with the frame. A miscalculation explains why the right-hand side of the headband encroaches onto the margin in order to accommodate a full rosette of the central row whereas on the left there was only room for a quarter of a rosette in each of the corners. Closely related rosettes appear in the frame of one of the paintings of Qaṣr al-Hayr al-Gharbī.[38]

Two sura illuminations of the codex of Damascus are also based on rosettes, but these are not enclosed within a frame. On f. 58a (sura 41), the headband consists of eight rosettes made of four spear-head like petals in cruciform position, linked by an arc painted in green or red or blue—the colour being

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37 Compare with O. Grabar and S. Nuseibeh, op. cit., p. 86, 90–91, 92, 96.

38 D. Schlumberger, op. cit., pl. 65 a, but also on a parapet (pl. 69 a) and on the floor fresco in the staircase, room XIX (pl. 34). See also O. Grabar and S. Nuseibeh, op. cit., p. 84 and 86–87.

different from that of the petals; a strip of unpainted parchment divides the arc from a gilt area close to the centre. What is left of the illumination on f. 78a (sura 54) suggests that it was made of three—possibly four—rosettes which are very close to the previous ones. The difference consists in the shape of the arc between the petals: with its two lobes, it actually looks like a green number "three".[39] A rope was apparently connecting the ornaments, possibly with other motifs.

The four extant spearhead-like palmettes of the damaged illumination found on f. 43a (sura 35) in the same manuscript are less clearly vegetal (fig. 21). They are set on the tip of a gilt chevron (that is set close to the fold on two blue commas arranged as a chevron) within a frame and point in the direction of the outer margin.

In both copies, the vegetal components are usually less prominent. In each of them, a composition combines a twig and a column as a support. In the Damascus codex, the illumination is located on f. 9a (sura 19; fig. 20). Two symmetrical twigs rise from a basket depicted on top of a column. They spread out comma-like scrolls—alternately red, green and blue with golden leaves—which reach the edge of the parchment in its present state—a small portion of the heading seems to have been lost. Strangely enough, the visible portion of the inner part of the basket—painted in blue—is cut by the two twigs so that the space between them is left unpainted. The outline of the basket is crudely indicated by a green line; its body is divided into two halves in the same way. The basketwork is unconvincingly rendered by red and green lines, with stripes of unpainted parchment between them in order to enhance the contrasts and suggest the relief.

The composition on f. M 1a (sura 17) in the Fustat codex sounds like a direct replica of the former, by a more skilled artist (fig. 25). Here again, a basket is located on top of a column. A Y-shaped gilded element stands in the basket and supports between its branches a twig—as suggested by its green colour. It develops towards the outer margin in a way similar to the illumination on f. M 32a (sura 36): in the centre of each loop, there is a rosette or a stylised flower, and grapes and leaves grow towards the outside of the twig, between the loops. The illuminator was more skilled than his counterpart who oddly adapted the scrolls to the space available between the suras.

In the Damascus codex, sura 31 is separated from sura 32 (f. 33b) by a headband of which the main element is a series of long stripped cones, derived

39 Ibid., pl. 33 (centre left) and 34.

from the cornucopia.[40] The mouth of each cone is gilt and releases, in addition to the body of the next cone, two symmetrically arranged leaves. From the last cone in the row, close to the outer margin, develops a central spearhead-like central figure which is hemmed in by what might be seen as either two bunches of palms or two wings. The latter were probably originally gilt, but only a few gold flakes are still visible; the centre of the spearhead-like element is also gilt, with green and red lines underlining the contour. A detail of the illumination, namely the leaves, is also found at the basis of a column in the Damascus codex (f. 9a, sura 19) and in the Fustat codex between the compartments of the headband preceding sura 20 (f. M 9a) and at the basis of a vase (before sura 37, f. M 37a).

Architecture is another important component of the decorative repertoire of sura illuminations. The column plays a comparatively important role in both manuscripts, although the space available between the suras does not seem suited to such a component. Actually, the artists had to disregard verisimilitude and to depict columns lying on the side, not as if they had fallen, but as if they had evaded gravity. This could have led to disproportionately long columns in the Fustat codex, but a sense of proportion led the artist(s) to avoid drawing columns which would occupy more than half of the width of the page. In this manuscript, the first instance, found on f. M 1a in the space between sura 17 and 18, has been mentioned previously, next to its counterpart in the Damascus codex (fig. 20 and 25). The shaft and the capital are minutely depicted. The lower part of the shaft is fluted, as suggested by the stripes alternating between green and gold, and the upper part looks like a torsade. The capital is unmistakably Corinthian. In the Damascus codex, the parallel illumination, found on f. 9a (sura 19; fig. 20), has already been discussed. Due to the size of the column, the components are treated in a more schematic way than in the other manuscript. The base is close to the inner margin, but does not reach the edge of the writing surface; two leaves grow from its upper torus. The gilt shaft occupies less than half the line and bears a small capital; a green shape with three points recalling the acanthus leaves outlines both sides of the latter.

In the same manuscript, a column with a vase on top of it is found at the bottom of f. 57b, after the last line of sura 38 (fig. 24). But the column's size is more important than in the previous case and the depiction far more accurate. The basis is a careful reproduction of a real one, with the various components in contrasting colours; the shaft, painted in green and red, with the contour of the red area left unpainted, suggests the veins of the marble. The upper part

40 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2002), fig. 11.

of the shaft up to the bottom of the capital has been lost. The capital itself is a good rendition of an original with acanthus leaves: here again the various parts are depicted in a realistic way. The open calyx which has been placed on top of the capital is rendered with more skill than the basket found on f. 9a (sura 19; fig. 20): its base is conical and is connected to the calyx by a short stem. On both sides, the rim turns down widely. The cup itself is fluted—as suggested by the use of various colours. From the calyx surges a cross-like element with a cylindrical body which, in the tradition of the Late Antiquity, is meant for water or a water sprinkling device—for instance in the manuscript Paris, BNF Syriaque 33, f. 8b which provides a nice parallel to this detail.[41]

In the Fustat codex, a striking parallel is found on f. M 37a, between sura 37 and 38. The artist has depicted two columns, complete with their basis and capitals, that close to the fold supporting a small arch in which a lamp is seen hanging, the second column being set "above" the arch. The capital of the upper column supports a calyx containing a T-shaped element with a cylindrical body, in other words a stylised stream of water gushing out of it. In the same manuscript, there is a second example of two columns set one upon the other (although depicted horizontally): in the illumination on f. M 19b (sura 23), a red and gold circle plays the same role as the arch in linking the two columns. All their components, basis, shaft and capital, are rendered with great accuracy, as was the case for the illumination on f. 9a (sura 19) in the Damascus codex. In the Fustat codex, the columns of the sura ornament between sura 22 and 23 (f. M 19b) are supported by a vase—a hydria?—depicted close to the fold. At the opposite, a lanceolate device covered with scales is set directly on top of the second column capital, its tip slightly encroaching on the margin.

These illuminations including an architectural component belong to the group of unframed headbands. Conversely, a fourth illumination of the Fustat codex, already mentioned before, also includes columns and could have been discussed with the other group. The frame consists of two parallel gilded lines terminated at both ends by a hook turning outwards. Between the lines, a compartment consisting of an oblong shape made of two tiny columns connected at both extremities by a half circle is repeated seven times. They are separated from each other by two crenelated devices joined by their tip.

The discovery of the "Umayyad codex of Sanaa" (Sanaa, DaM Inv. 20–33.1) provided an outstanding example of the way in which architecture was used

41 J. Leroy, *Les manuscrits syriaques à peintures conservés dans les bibliothèques d'Europe et d'Orient. Contribution à l'étude de l'iconographie des églises de langue syriaque*, Paris, 1964, pl. 1 [Bibliothèque archéologique et historique, vol. LXXVII].

by Umayyad illuminators in the decoration of the Qur'anic manuscripts. In the two copies under discussion, the architectural components do not reach such a sophisticated level, but they are clearly related to details of the two full-page depictions of the Sanaa codex.

Scrolls developing out of a vessel are a well-known feature of Umayyad art: they are found on various monuments of the period, the most famous instances occurring on the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock,[42] with their varied vegetal repertoire. It was actually widely used in the Near-East during the sixth and seventh centuries: examples ranging from a mosaic from Daphne (dated between 526 and 540)[43] to Saint Christopher church in Qabr Hiram (575)[44] or the synagogue in Ma'on.[45]

Turning now to the details, we can note that the basis of the columns in the Fustat codex, f. M la and M 19b are of the same type as that in the Damascus codex, f. 9a (sura 19; fig. 20). The capitals are usually inspired by a Corinthian model, a feature found earlier in Syriac manuscripts.[46] Those from Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī show a very similar structure to that found in the illumination of sura 39 (f. 57b; fig. 24):[47] in both cases, there is a central—and circular or nearly circular—element on the abacus which is divided into two halves by a horizontal furrow; on the other hand, an open V-shaped pattern ends with a hook on each side of the upper part of the capital. The first and smaller column (f. 9a) is more sketchy, but its capital could be compared with those on mosaics, with a

42 O. Grabar et S. Nuseibeh, op. cit., *passim*. See other examples in R.E. Brünnow and A. von Domaszewski, *Die Provincia Arabia auf Grund zweier in den Jahren 1897 und 1898 unternommenen Reisen und der Berichte früherer Reisender*, t. II, Strasbourg, 1905, p. 151, fig. 735, pp. 154–158, fig. 738–742, p. 166, fig. 750 and p. 168, fig. 752 (examples of bowls), and p. 153, fig. 737, p. 163, fig. 747 et p. 165, fig. 749 (vessels with a neck). A low relief in basalt from Azraq kept in Irbid museum provides another example of this pattern (*Les Omeyyades, Naissance de l'art islamique*, Madrid/Amman/Aix-en-Provence, 2001, p. 162). Also M. Almagro, L. Caballero, J. Zozaya et A. Almagro, *Qusayr 'Amra. Residencia y baños omeyas en el desierto de Jordania*, Madrid, 1975, pl. IX C et p. 54.

43 F. Baratte, *Catalogue des mosaïques romaines et paléochrétiennes du Musée du Louvre*, Paris, 1978, pp. 121–123.

44 F. Baratte, op. cit., pp. 132–144 (with bibliography).

45 Dated to the sixth century AD. See M. Avi-Yonah, Une école de mosaïque à Gaza au sixième siècle, *La mosaïque gréco-romaine II, Vienne, 30 août–4 septembre 1971*, Paris, 1975, pl. CLXXX, 1. The author shows how this iconography was used in churches as well as in synagogues.

46 See J. Leroy, op. cit., pl. 1.

47 D. Schlumberger, op. cit., pl. 71.

stylised version of the acanthus. In the Fustat codex, the shafts of the columns exhibit a variety of solutions: one of those on f. M 19b is entirely gilt, like that of the Damascus codex, f. la; there is nothing exactly similar to the shaft found on f. 57a, but an attempt at suggesting the veins of the marble can be seen in the illumination of sura 38 of the Fustat codex (f. M 37a). The solution used here is slightly more satisfying than is the case for some of the columns on the Yemeni fragment already alluded to—namely those of the main nave on the painting on the right hand page and the mihrab on the opposite painting.[48]

Vases are commonly found in Umayyad works of art. In most instances, vegetal scrolls develop out of a vase or a basket located at the bottom of the composition; in one of the mosaics of the Great mosque of Damascus, a vase is depicted on the top of a column in a way similar to the illumination of f. 9a (sura 19) in the Damascus codex (fig. 20). However, in the latter, the object is not a vase, but a basket similar to that found in the illumination separating sura 17 and 18 in the Fustat codex (f. M 1a), but also in the decoration of Khirbet al-Mafjar[49] and even more clearly close to the various instances appearing on church mosaics of Transjordan from the middle or the second half of the sixth century.[50] The use of a fillet to underline the contour of the container and divide it into two parts can be paralleled to a representation of a jug at the bottom of a depiction of a mosque on the Qur'anic fragment Inv. 20–33.1.[51] In both manuscripts, the baskets are rendered rather schematically whereas the vases, for instance the open calyx on f. 57b (sura 39) of the Damascus codex, have been depicted with great accuracy by the illuminators; the conical base of the calyx and its fluted body are well represented in Umayyad mosaics, on stone or stucco bas-reliefs, even on metal works (fig. 24).[52]

Another component of the illumination can be related to an Umayyad repertory based on vegetal themes: the cornucopiae, probably derived from acanthus sheaths of the Antiquity. The illumination preceding sura 19 in the Fustat codex (f. M 6a) is a particularly clear example. A parallel may be found in the other manuscript, although in a slightly different presentation. Here, on f. 33b (sura 32), the elongated trumpet-like shapes recall the cornucopiae

48 H.-C. von Bothmer, Architekturbilder im Koran. Eine Prachthandschrift der Umayyadenzeit aus dem Yemen, *Pantheon* 45 (1987), colour plates I and II.

49 R.W. Hamilton, op. cit., fig. 215a and 229e; fig. 215e also gives an interesting parallel as far as the division of the surface is concerned.

50 M. Picirillo, *L'Arabie chrétienne*, Paris, 2002, p. 153, 177 (dated 565 AD), 216, 240 (dated 587).

51 H.C. von Bothmer, op. cit., p. 7, pl. II.

52 See above.

found on the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock[53]—and also in the Great mosque of Damascus.[54] In the Damascus codex they evolved into a rectilinear version which could also be understood as candelabra. The way in which the end of each is fitted into the mouth of the next one is reminiscent of contemporaneous compositions using this component. On the manuscript, the mouths open in a fashion similar to that of the cornucopiae or the calyces of the mosaics; this induces us to consider the illumination as a series of cornucopiae, with vegetation gushing out of their mouths, as is the case in the Fustat codex as well as in both the Jerusalem and Damascus examples. The wide variety of leaf shapes appearing on the mosaics can be paralleled to those of the two illuminations under discussion.[55]

The most distinctive feature of the illuminations preceding sura 32 (f. 33b) and 38 (f. 54a; fig. 23) in the Damascus codex is certainly the final ornament which is strongly reminiscent of the double wings or the paired foliage scrolls of the Dome of the Rock;[56] there, a composition with a twin bunch of palm leaves vividly recalls in every respect—calyx, shape of the leaves, bulbous axial motif—the first illumination. Although bulbous motifs recalling closely the other ornament under discussion can be found on the walls of the Dome of the Rock,[57] the most striking parallel is certainly the illumination on f. M 19b (sura 23) of the Fustat codex; on the other hand, scales associated with vegetal elements can be found on the mosaics, but also on stucco and stone in Umayyad times.[58] A simpler version found in the Damascus codex (f. 43a, sura 35) belongs here.

In the same manuscript, the illuminations preceding sura 18 (f. 1b; fig. 19), 30 (f. 28a) and 36 (f. 47a; fig. 22) are of a more intriguing nature. No direct parallel can be found in the manuscripts which so far proved a consistent source of comparative material. These ornaments may have been inspired by a component of the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock, namely the diadems, crowns and necklaces which distinctly share a few characteristics with the decoration

53 O. Grabar et S. Nuseibeh, op. cit., pp. 88–92.

54 Marg. van Berchem, in K.A.C. Creswell, *Early Muslim architecture*, I, Oxford, 1969, pl. 58 c–e (especially c and d) and pl. 60 b–d where the whole final setting is very close to the headband of S. XXXII; according to Marg. van Berchem, the last mentioned mosaics are a Seljuk repair (p. 360).

55 O. Grabar et S. Nuseibeh, op. cit., pp. 86–87 and 126–127.

56 Ibid., p. 92 inf. or 119–121 for instance.

57 Ibid., p. 85 (upper ill.), 86 (lower ill.), etc.

58 D. Schlumberger, op. cit., pl. 76e; also R.W. Hamilton, op. cit., fig. 89 a–b, 216c and pl. XXXII.

of the manuscript. The row of gilt diamonds on the headband on f. 1b (sura 18; fig. 19) could eventually be paralleled with a composition which appears on the vases of the Dome of the Rock mosaics.[59] The repertory of the jewellery also seems to be the source for some details of this illumination: the oval ornaments and the small rectangles, even the tiny circles which are seen immediately below each component are very close to the jewels represented on the mosaics.[60] The same can be said of the illumination on f. 28a (sura 30; fig. 22): it vividly recalls some of the diadems which are made of a band—with a row of squares, or of circles (for gems) crowned by triangles;[61] a similar composition also appears on a vase.[62] Smaller parts of the jewellery can also be compared to details of this illumination—for instance series of tiny triangles from which pearls hang.[63] A unpublished manuscript from the deposit of Damascus has a clearer version of the jewellery: it can support the interpretation I have suggested here.

Both manuscripts are particularly important as they can be dated with some precision. Their script has some connections with the *ḥijāzī* style, not so much the version exemplified in the portions of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* transcribed by Hands A or B (fig. 1–2), but more with the work of Hand D (fig. 4) or the copyists of London, BL Or. 2165 (fig. 8). The latter on the one hand as well as both the Damascus and Fustat codices on the other hand witness a completely new feature in the—young—history of the Arabic script: the deliberate iteration of a style of writing. The two hands cooperating in the transcription of Or. 2165 or the two (or more) copyists of the other two copies of the Qurʾan were able to transcribe the text in such a way that the difference between the hands was not immediately detectable. In other words, they belonged to a world where scribes had a professional approach to their trade, learning a specific style and using it. We may go a step further: we have before our eyes the beginnings of a new concept, that of Qurʾanic script. Such a specialization is perhaps not completely new in the area, but is assuredly new in the Arabic manuscript tradition, a style becoming specific to a certain use. These elements point into the same direction: at the end of the first/seventh century, under the reign of caliph ʿAbd al-Malik, a fateful change occurred in the chancery of

59 O. Grabar et S. Nuseibeh, op. cit., pp. 120–121, 124–125, etc.
60 Ibid., p. 119, 124–127, 131.
61 Ibid., pp. 124–127.
62 Ibid., p. 118.
63 Ibid., p. 119 and 129.

the empire.[64] Arabic, both language and script, became the official medium of the administration. From some sources, we know that the caliphs had specific scripts devised for their own correspondence.[65] The relationship between the script of ʿAbd al-Malik's milestones and that of contemporaneous *muṣḥaf*s suggests that the latter were involved in this transformation which concurred with reforms involving the Qur'anic text. In addition, the use of the same script for a large number of copies stressed visually the fact that the text found on these manuscripts was identical.

It is difficult to determine when the original page setting was modified by the introduction into the Qur'anic manuscript of margins and line-end fillers. As the folios of Or. 2165 do not exhibit these features, I suggest that they were introduced slightly later and influenced the customs of the copyists who were still producing copies in a variety of *ḥijāzī*. This would explain the case of the manuscripts analysed previously, closer to the new standards of lay out but with an older variety of script. They may be contemporary with copies like the Damascus and Fustat codices, or even slightly later. In this case again, the study of the material suffers from the lack of any information about the place of production of these *muṣḥaf*s.

The illuminations tell a similar story: the repertory of the illuminators of both manuscripts belongs to the Umayyad period and is found on many contemporary works of art. They provide us with an important chronological argument, but they also show that a major change was occurring, at least in some circles. The conception of the Qur'an as a book was modified. The austere presentation of the Qur'anic text which was the hallmark of the earliest copies in *ḥijāzī* style which have come down to us and was probably a faithful replication of older codices, lost its attraction and its meaning for some patrons who felt the necessity to have a book which would have a nicer appearance and use a visual repertory in accordance with the taste of Near Eastern elites of that time. It is no surprise that, in the same way as the first generation of Muslims adopted the techniques they needed for the writing down of the Qur'an—like the codex or the *scriptio continua*—from the dominant manuscript tradition, in the last quarter of the first/seventh century, the illuminators and their patrons, with the aim of beautifying the *muṣḥaf*, appropriated from the Late Antique tradition

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64 Al-Jahshiyārī, K. *al-wuzarāʾ wa-l-kuttāb*, ed. M. al-Shaqqāʾ, I. al-Abyarī and ʿA. Shalabī, Cairo, 1938, p. 37; transl. J. Latz, *Das Buch der Wezire und Staatssekretäre von Ibn ʿAbdūs Al-Ǧahšiyārī. Anfänge und Umaiyadenzeit* [Beiträge zur Sprach- und Kulturgeschichte des Orients, 11], Walldorf-Hessen, 1958, pp. 85–86.

65 Ibid., p. 47; transl., p. 94.

a suitable decorative repertory. Judging from the illuminations, artists familiar with this tradition were entrusted with the task of decorating the Qurʾanic copies, which means that we cannot discard that professional Christian or Jewish illuminators were hired to carry out this task. Arabic sources have preserved accounts about Christian scribes transcribing the Qurʾan for Muslim patrons.[66] The same situation may have been the case for the illumination.

Al-Samhūdī, transmitting an account going back to Mālik b. Anas, mentions the codex sent by al-Ḥajjāj to Medina.[67] He goes on reporting that he was the first to send copies of the Qurʾan to the major cities, and that the *muṣḥaf* in Medina was used on Thursdays and Fridays during the dawn prayer.[68] Al-Ḥajjāj also sent a copy to the ʿAmr mosque in Fustat. His action roused the anger of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān who decided to have a copy made for the same purpose.[69] The Fustat codex could be one of these two manuscripts,[70] although the unfinished state of its illuminations can be an argument against such an attribution. However, if such was the case, it would then be an outstanding example of the copies produced for the higher levels of the Umayyad Empire.

There is no doubt that the ruling circles of the Umayyad state became concerned with the Qurʾan as a written text. As Omar Hamdan has shown, a project was set up under al-Ḥajjāj's supervision between 84 and 85 AH;[71] it aimed at providing the Muslim community with an improved *muṣḥaf*: according to the sources, the orthography was reformed, the diacriticals added to a *rasm* which did not have any, the components of the Qurʾan were numbered and, in the

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66 A. George, op. cit., pp. 52–53. See above p. 44, n. 26.

67 Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ al-wafā bi-akhbār dār al-Muṣṭafā*, ed. M. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Beirut, 1984, vol. 2, p. 668.

68 Ibid.

69 Ibn Duqmāq, *Description de l'Egypte*, ed. K. Vollers, part 1, Cairo, 1893, pp. 72–74; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-l-iʿtibār bi-dhikr al-khiṭāṭ wa-l-āthār*, ed. A. Fuʾad Sayyid, vol. IV-1, London, 2001, pp. 30–31. M. Tillier suggested that the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* may have been Asmā's *muṣḥaf* (review of *La transmission écrite du Coran dans les débuts de l'islam. Le codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, Brill, 2009, *Journal of Qurʾanic Studies* 13–2 [2011], pp. 112–113). Actually, I stated that it seemed unlikely that the manuscript was transcribed "dans un contexte officiel" (F. Déroche, op. cit. [2009], p. 153, which excludes Tillier's interpretation) and that it was in any case produced before the "*Maṣāḥif* project" of al-Ḥajjāj.

70 As the word *naʿja* is apparently written correctly in the Fustat codex, this would exclude that it could have been ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz' copy (see Ibn Duqmāq, ibid.; al-Maqrīzī, ibid.).

71 O. Hamdan, *Studien zur Kanonisierung des Korantextes. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrīs Beiträge zur Geschichte des Korans*, Wiesbaden, 2006, p. 141.

end, copies were sent to various large cities of the Empire.[72] The information has probably to be taken critically since the diacriticals were in use at an earlier date and the manuscript evidence shows that the orthography had already begun to be upgraded before that date. However, some of these steps echo quite directly what has been observed in the manuscripts. In addition, the political overtone of the move is quite obvious and the implication of the ruling circles may have resulted in the commissioning of copies which were to reflect the might of the dynasty and its religious commitments. A detail in the account about ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān's codex might also indicate that some form of collation started to be applied at that moment: once the manuscript had been completed, a reward was offered to whom would find a scribal mistake in the copy and a *qārīʾ* actually found one at 38: 23.[73]

These conclusions are further strengthened by other copies of the Qurʾan that can be directly related to the same group (O I) on the basis of their script. According to a tentative census of these copies in the four collections of early Qurʾanic material, it turns out that a fair number of fragments are found among the "Damascus Papers" and two among the fragments from the ʿAmr mosque in Fustat.[74] No example of O I is present in the Kairouan collection and we shall have to wait the final publication of the Sanaa trove to know whether O I reached the Yemen.[75]

Before examining some of the Damascus and Fustat fragments in O I script, I should briefly draw attention to a situation which may be compared to that described in the previous chapter, namely the coexistence of two formats of *muṣḥaf*, vertical and oblong. Among the latter, a version of O I close to that found on the Damascus and Fustat codices has been in use (fig. 26), next to another one, perhaps like Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 4321 (fig. 27) and certainly ŞE 3591 (fig. 28), which seems to verge on *ḥijāzī* style, with the shafts leaning to the right, although it is clearly more slender than the script of London, BL Or. 2165 (fig. 8). It would seem sensible to see in such fragments the forerunners of O I, a point which is partly supported by the orthography,[76] and to distinguish accordingly

72 See also Mālik b. Anas in Samhūdī: al-Samhūdī, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 668.

73 Ibn Duqmāq, op. cit., p. 73; al-Maqrīzī, op. cit., p. 31.

74 See Annex 1 below.

75 I was able to have an extensive overview of the Kairouan collection thanks to Dr. Rammah. As for the Sanaa fragments, I rely almost exclusively on what has been published to this day since I have only be able to have a look at a selection of material, mostly in *ḥijāzī* style.

76 Their margins vary from a copy to another one, as is the case for the Damascus and Fustat codices, suggesting a period of transition. O Ia points nevertheless to a more organized manuscript production.

between an earlier version (O Ia) and that illustrated by the Damascus and Fustat codices (O Ib). On the other hand, the probable swiftness of these developments may have allowed for some overlap.

In the "Damascus Papers" collection in the Museum of Turkish and Islamic art in Istanbul, a few fragments are related to O I.[77] Among them is a coherent group of vertical copies on parchment of about the same size, 25×19 cm (ŞE 4806, 6277, 7645, 10670, 12821/1 and 12903) to which can be added a smaller one (21×15 cm), with ŞE 1186 (fig. 29) and 5793: by their dimensions, they are directly related to the Damascus codex (24×19,5 cm). In addition, the fragments of three larger copies have also been preserved: ŞE 78 (32,5×28,5 cm), ŞE 63 (36,2×27,5 cm; fig. 30),[78] close to the dimensions of the Fustat codex (37×31 cm), and ŞE 71 (41,2×36 cm; fig. 31) which is slightly larger and might be a folio volume. On the other hand, there seems to be only one fragment (ŞE 5713, 14,4×12,8 cm), which indicates that copies of smaller size also existed. In the Marcel collection of the National Library of Russia, in addition to the leaves from the Fustat codex, a fragment from a Qur'anic manuscript written in O Ib script has been preserved: the folios of Marcel 12 (36,8×31 cm; fig. 32) are close to the larger variety of these Qur'anic codices exemplified by ŞE 63 or the Fustat codex.

The script of these various copies is—with some small variations—related to O Ib. The similitude is not only a matter of letter shapes or mise-en-page, it also has to do with the line module the various copyists have been using. The largest copies are in agreement with the Fustat codex as far as the number of lines to the page is concerned: ŞE 63 (fig. 30) and 71 (fig. 31) have 25 lines to the page. However, Marcel 12, in spite of its similarities with the Fustat codex, has only 22 lines to the page (fig. 32) and ŞE 78, 20 lines. Copies like ŞE 1186 (fig. 29), 4806 or 7645 are close to this model, although with a varying numbers of lines. A few copies illustrate what might be another tendency, with only 16 lines (ŞE 6277, 10670, 12903 [fig. 33] and 13009), which could point to multi-volume sets. In spite of this diversity, the module for those scripts remains fairly constant. In the majority of cases the lines measure between 10 and 12,7 mm in height, with only two instances of a clearly lesser value (ŞE 1186 and 5713), in spite of the variety of the manuscripts' sizes: in the largest one, ŞE 71 (41,2×36 cm; 25 lines), a line is 12,7 mm high, very close to that of

77 As the work is still in progress, I shall give here only partial results.
78 A.S. Demirkol et al., *1400. Yılında Kur'an-ı kerim*, Istanbul, 2010, p. 147.

ŞE 10670 (12,5 mm), although the latter is written on substantially smaller folios (24,1 × 19,3 cm; 16 lines).[79] They retain the main characteristics which have been described (*scriptio continua*, margins, consistent division into verses), but a fair proportion exhibits a new feature: short vowels marked with red dots, as in the Damascus and Fustat codices. The date of their introduction remains open to debate. Their multiplication on the O Ib manuscripts suggests however that they could be contemporary with the diffusion of this script, which would be in agreement with what is reported of al-Ḥajjāj's "*Maṣāḥif* project". Among the copies which have been discussed here, some have the *basmala* written alone on the first line of the sura, ŞE 63, 78 or 4608 for instance. This was already the case of the *ḥijāzī* copy Saint Petersburg, NLR Marcel 19 (fig. 9)[80] and sometimes in the portion of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* transcribed by Hand C, when the beginning of the new sura was on the top of the page.[81]

The ornamentation found on these fragments often only consists of drawings in black ink (fig. 29 and 31). An exception is an unpublished fragment with a sura divider (ŞE 4405a; fig. 34) based on the same composition with rosettes as in the Fustat codex (f. M 13) and another one with a succession of twigs supporting curved half-palmettes. The other examples are either relying on the repetition of a decorative compartment over the full width of the justification, or on a variety of braids or undulating lines. The end of the last line of a sura is often filled with clusters of dots (see fig. 27 and 29)—a presentation already noted on some of the manuscripts examined in the previous chapter, but a similarity with the final punctuation of a textual unit in some Syriac manuscripts can be detected in the two examples adduced here.[82]

The results of this census are only indicative, as part of the evidence disappeared over the centuries and a few remaining fragments have still to be identified and reassembled. However, the concentration of such copies in Damascus and at a lesser degree in Fustat may indicate that O I was connected with the central region of the Empire. This palaeographically homogeneous group of manuscripts provides a fresh view of the changes which the Arabic

79 In ŞE 5793 and 13009 the height of a line is very close to the majority of cases (respectively 9,15–9,4 and 9 mm).

80 See ch. 2.

81 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2009), p. 30.

82 See for instance the MSS London, British Library, Add. 14571 and 14591, possibly also Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, folder No 20, f. 222b, dated respectively to 518 AD, 569 AD and 613–614 AD (see W. Hatch, *An album of dated Syriac manuscripts*, Boston, 1946, pl. X, XXX and XL). I thank Mr. P. Neuenkirchen for drawing my attention to this point.

script and the *muṣḥaf* underwent by the end of the first/seventh and beginning of the second/eighth centuries. Two aspects seem especially important: the first one is that the work was undertaken by anonymous script designers who submitted the Arabic script to a complete revamp and the second one is the diffusion of the results among the copyists. The duration of this process of transformation remains unclear and it may have lasted some time, if the fragments Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 3591 (fig. 28) and 4321 (fig. 27) reflect a first step in the development of O I. The second point may imply that the Umayyad ruling elite played a role in the diffusion of O I and even exerted some form of control over the whole process of book production. The references common to those who transcribed these *muṣḥaf*s (same shapes and some common habits) suggest that some sort of teaching/training had been set up for copyists/calligraphers. The B Ia script which can be related to the later development of the *ḥijāzī* style *muṣḥaf* could be a parallel evolution—in another milieu or in another region. The consistent size and mise-en-page of the largest copies can be the result of an official patronage—which the sources actually mention.[83] It is tempting to deduce from the account of al-Nadīm about calligraphy in Umayyad times that there was even a structure where the transcription was performed.[84] However, the diversity of the fragments in O I which have been preserved, ranging from the elegant Fustat codex to more common copies, indicates that this style had some success and that its diffusion was not restricted to the elite or to official patronage.

The graphical coherence of the copies should not hide some variety in the lay out of the text, notably in the use of colours. An unpublished oblong copy has the *basmala* written in red and in the fragment ŞE 10670 the junction between two suras is highlighted by a series of lines in red and green.[85] Other fragments, written in other kinds of scripts, may be contemporary with these. One of them (TIEM, ŞE 12914), an oblong format, has some of its lines written in colour, without any pattern of distribution which could for the moment allow us to understand the purpose of this presentation.[86] In another fragment from

83 The role of al-Ḥajjāj has been discussed previously. In his *Fihrist*, al-Nadīm tells the story of caliph ʿUmar II who commissioned a copy to Khālid b. Abī al-Hayyāj, then declined to pay for it (*K. al-Fihrist*, ed. R. Tajaddud, Tehran, 1971, p. 9).

84 I shall return to this topic in the next chapter.

85 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2002), fig. 14; id., Inks and page setting in early Qur'ânic manuscripts, in *From codicology to technology. Islamic manuscripts and their place in scholarship*, S. Brinkmann et B. Wiesmüller éd., Berlin, p. 84 and fig. 1.

86 See F. Déroche, op. cit. (2002), p. 634 and fig. 15; id., op. cit., pp. 85–88 and fig. 2.

the Damascus collection (TIEM, ŞE 362), also in oblong format, the colours are used in progressively more elaborate compositions, starting with alternating groups of lines in brown, green or red and culminating in the small portion of the manuscript which has been preserved in a chessboard-like composition, then in a diamond extending across the writing surface.[87] This use of coloured inks reminds one of the Late Antique *carminata figurata*. However, there is no link whatsoever between the text and the figures.[88]

The Umayyad codices of Damascus and Fustat are of course important for the information they provide about the date and the chronological implications they entail. They also show a dramatic change in the conception of the *muṣḥaf*, reflecting the control over the text the Umayyads were trying to implement. The diffusion of a regularised version of the early script, O I, closely related to that of official inscriptions, coincided with the emergence of a new concern, that of a book reflecting through its beauty the importance and the perfection of the text. This change is meaningful as it reveals the aspirations of a more sophisticated community—at least in some circles, well aware of their cultural environment. The reasons behind this new concern can be sought in a general tendency which has been described in the following terms by Barry Flood about the architectural realisations of the Umayyads in Damascus: "the desire to rival the best efforts of the Christians and the need to convince by appearances were adequately addressed by the construction of a monumental ensemble which was not only worthy of an imperial capital, but strongly redolent of that most familiar by sight or reputation to the Syrian subjects of the Umayyads."[89] In the field of manuscript production, the new *muṣḥaf*, eventually produced under official patronage, was challenging the Christian luxury Bibles by its appearance. Its also conveyed visually the idea that the text transcribed in the same script, O I, was identical. An aesthetic and ideologically motivated change, based on material choices (the regularised script, the calamus adapted

87 F. Déroche, op. cit. (2002), p. 634 and fig. 16; id., op. cit. (2009), pp. 88–93 and fig. 3–4.

88 On the *carmina figurata*, see U. Ernst, *Carmen figuratum, Geschichte des Figurengedichts von den antiken Ursprüngen bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters* [Pictura et poesis, 1], Cologne/Weimar/Vienna, 1991. The case of this fragment seems however more related with what Ernst calls "Randformen des Figurengedichts", among which the *Codex aureus*, MS Stockholm, Kungl. Bibl. Cod. A 35, is certainly the best known example (see K. Bierbrauer, s.v. Codex Aureus, I.C.A. aus Canterbury, *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, t. 2, p. 2199).

89 B. Flood, *The Great mosque of Damascus. Studies on the makings of an Umayyad visual culture*, Leiden-Boston, Leiden, 2001, p. 226.

to it, the margins and in some cases the illuminations), had taken place. Judging from the number of surviving fragments in O I script, this style succeeded in quickly gaining a handsome diffusion.

Appendix I

A selection of Umayyad Qur'anic manuscripts in O I script and vertical format.

Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 63 (fig. 30)
Text: 2: 91–119; 3: 199–4: 2; 4: 4–7; 5: 71–6: 38; 6: 78–161; 7: 74–95; 9: 19–36; 28: 78–29: 12; 29: 57–30: 38; 31: 24–32: 12; 34: 3–22; 39: 9–32
Parchment. 71 f.
Folio size: 36,2 × 27,5 cm.
25 l. Writing surface: 30,5 × 22 cm
[module = 12,7 mm].
Vowel signs (red dots).
Basmala alone on the first line of the sura, followed by dashes.

Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 71 (fig. 31)
Text: 23: 77–24: 16.
Parchment. 2 f.
Folio size: 41,2 × 36 cm.
25 l. Writing surface: 30,6 × 26,7 cm [module = 12,7 mm].
No vowel signs.
Sura headbands in ink, with a vignette.

Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 78
Text: 25: 77–31: 27.
Parchment. 31 f.
Folio size: 32,5 × 28,5 cm
25 l. Writing surface: 24,5–25 × 22 cm [module = 10,4 mm].
A few vowel signs (red dots).
Basmala alone on the first line of the sura.

Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 321 (the Umayyad codex of Damascus; fig. 19–24)
Text: 17: 101–20: 120; 23: 78–100; 24: 1–24; 24: 40–60; 29: 7–33: 55; 34: 9–38: 88; 40: 84–45: 16; 46: 32–47: 13; 47: 38–48: 17; 53: 52–54: 22.
Parchment. 78 f.

Folio size: 24 × 19,5 cm.
18–21 l. Writing surface: 19,6/21 × 16/16,7 cm. [module = 10,5–11,5 mm]. Ruling with a dry point.
A few vowel signs (red dots).
Illuminated sura headbands.
Bibliography: F. Déroche, New evidence about Umayyad book hands, in *Essays in honour of Salāh al-Dīn al-Munajjid* [al-Furqān publication, nº 70], London, 2002, pp. 629–634.

Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 1186 (fig. 29)
Text: 30: 41–31: 25; 32: 21–33: 28; 34: 14–28; 35: 28–40; 40: 22–41: 21.
Parchment. 18 f.
Folio size: 20,7 × 14,6 cm.
19–26 l. Writing surface: 16,2/16,7 × 11,8 cm [module = 6,7–9 mm]. Ruling with a dry point.
No vowel signs.
The end of the sura is followed by a line of dashes and triangles of dashes. A crude ornament separates the suras.

Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 4806
Text: 21: 36–57; 23: 6–27; 24: 55–38: 88.
Parchment. 47 f.
Folio size: 24,6 × 20 cm
19–26 l. Writing surface: 20,6/21 × 17,3 cm (in one case 21,5 × 14 cm) [module = 8,6–11,4 mm]. Ruling with a dry point.
Basmala alone on the first line of the sura, followed by dashes.

Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 5713
Text: 6: 119–126; 7: 22–30; 7: 43–89; 8: 9–9: 18.
Parchment. 18 f.
Folio size: 14,4 × 12,8 cm.
16–19 l. Writing surface: 12,1/12,5 × 10 cm [module = 6,9–8 mm].
No vowel signs.
The end of sura 8 is followed by a line of dashes between two *hā'* and interrupted by a *mīm* (?). A blank line separates the suras.

Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 5793
Text: 9: 15–38; 9: 116–10: 10.
Parchment. 4 f.
Folio size: 21,5 × 17,7 cm.
19–20 l. Writing surface: 17–17,4 × 13–13,5 cm [module = 9,1–9,4 mm].

No vowel signs.
Basmala stretched out alone on the first line of the sura.

Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 6277
Text: 24: 61–34: 45; 35: 40–36: 11; 36: 40–37: 61; 91: [11]-93: [8].
Parchment, with replacements in paper. 90 f.
Folio size: 25 × 18,4 cm.
16 l. Writing surface: 15,3/17 × 13,3 cm [module = 10,2–11,3 mm]
A few vowel signs (red dots).
Basmala alone on the first line of the sura.

Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 7645
Text: 3: 115–4: 75.
Parchment. 22 f.
Folio size: 24,8 × 20,5 cm.
21–23 l. Writing surface: 21,4/22,4 × 17,5/18,1 cm [module= 10,2–10,7 mm]. Ruling with ink.

Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 10670
Text: 4: 173–5: 4; 5: 41–44; 5: 48–61; 5: 66–72; 5: 98–106; 5: 110–6: 1; 6: 11–20.
Parchment. 10 f.
Folio size: 24,1 × 19,3 cm.
16 l. Writing surface: 18,8 × 14,3 cm [module = 12,5 mm].
Modern vocalisation has been added in red.
The last three lines of the sura are written in green ink, then the *basmala*, alone on the first line of the next sura, is written in red, followed by the first two lines in green. The sura titles are written in green and probably contemporaneous with the copy.

Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 12821/1
Text: 17: 23–108.
Parchment. 6 f.
Folio size: 24,9 × 17,3 cm.
20–21 l. Writing surface: 19,7/20 × 13,4 cm [module = 10–10,3 mm]. Ruling with a dry point.

Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 12903/1 (fig. 33)
Text: 2, ??–[29]; 2: 113-[116]; 2: 177–186; 2: [206]-215.
Parchment. 4 f.
Folio size: 25 × 18,5 cm.
16 l. Writing surface: 15,5–16 × 13,2 cm [module = 10,3–10,6 mm].
Vowel signs (red dots).
Frame ruling.

Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 13009
Text: 5: 6–12.
Parchment. 1 f.
Folio size: 18,6 × 17,4 cm.
16 l. Writing surface: 13,5 × 15 cm [module = 9 mm].

Saint Petersburg, NLR Marcel 12 (fig. 32)
Text: 10: 22–11: 102.
Parchment. 10 f.
Folio size: 36,8 × 31 cm.
22 l. Writing surface: 26,7 × 23,1 cm. [module = 12,7 mm].
Vowel signs (red dots).
A title (in red) has been added.

Saint Petersburg, NLR Marcel 13 (the Umayyad codex of Fustat; fig. 25)
Text: 15: 14–17: 12; 17: 36–23: 12; 24: 49–61; 25: 16–27: 89; 30: 3–41: 32.
Parchment: 64 f.
Folio size: 37 × 31 cm.
25 l. Writing surface: 27, 5 × 23,2 cm [module = 11,5 mm].
Vowel signs (red dots).
Illuminated sura headbands.
Bibliography: F. Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran: Aux origines de la calligraphie coranique* [Bibliothèque Nationale, Catalogue des manuscrits arabes, 2e partie, Manuscrits musulmans, I/1], Paris, 1983, pp. 144–145, no 268; id., Colonnes, vases et rinceaux. Sur quelques enluminures d'époque omeyyade, *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Comptes rendus des séances de l'année 2004* [2006], pp. 227–264; A. George, *The rise of Islamic calligraphy*, London, 2010, pp. 75–78 and fig. 50–51.

CHAPTER 4

Imperial Scriptoria?

The discovery of the fragments in the ceiling of the Great mosque of Sanaa in 1972 led, as we have seen, to a momentous change in the historiography of the early Qurʾanic manuscripts as well as in our knowledge of Umayyad art.[1] Two illuminated pages facing each other at the beginning of a copy of impressive size caused a sensation and a discussion among specialists as to the age of this specific manuscript. In the aftermath of the short presentation by Marilyn Jenkins on the newly discovered fragments in the catalogue *Maṣāḥif Ṣanʿāʾ*,[2] Hans-Caspar Von Bothmer published an important paper where he analysed in detail the ornaments of the twenty-five folios which were found and provided a codicological description based on a direct observation of the material.[3] He suggested an attribution to the last years of the reign of al-Walīd I, who reigned from 86/705 to 96/715.

However, historians of Islamic art expressed some doubts about the date of the copy and the idea that we actually had Umayyad manuscripts was scorned by some of them. Estelle Whelan published a paper which she intended as a first step in a demonstration of the supposedly mistaken attribution of the copy to the Umayyad period.[4] She had rightly noted a close palaeographic relationship between Inv. 20–33.1 and Dublin, CBL Is 1404 (fig. 35) but reached the conclusion that the latter was from a later period. Although she avoided suggesting a date for the manuscript, she remarked that "no external evidence so far known … permits a definitive attribution of any Qurʾanic manuscript or group to a period earlier than the third/ninth century."[5] Her views reflected a rather widely shared idea that no early copy of the Qurʾan had survived. Comparing Is 1404 with a manuscript belonging to another palaeographic group with a strong connection with the third/ninth century, she strove to demonstrate that they "represent[ed] two distinct traditions of copying the

1 As already stressed by Hans-Caspar von Bothmer (Architekturbilder im Koran. Eine Prachthandschrift der Umayyadenzeit aus dem Yemen, *Pantheon* 45 [1987], p. 17).

2 M. Jenkins, A vocabulary of Umayyad ornament, in *Maṣāḥif Ṣanʿāʾ*, Kuwait, 1985, pp. 19–23.

3 Hans-Caspar von Bothmer, op. cit., pp. 4–20.

4 E. Whelan, Writing the word of God I, *Ars Orientalis* 20 (1990), pp. 113–147. Her contribution was considered by Sheila Blair "the one that [she thinks] holds the most promise" (*Islamic calligraphy*, Edinburgh, 2006, p. 110).

5 Ibid., p. 124.

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Qurʾan" which "[were] more consonant with production in two geographical centres"[6]—instead of seeing each of them as representative of two periods.

Is 1404 (fig. 35) was kept in the Egyptian delta at the beginning of the twentieth century, when Bernhard Moritz saw it and published pictures of twelve of its illuminations in his *Arabic palaeography*.[7] It was later acquired by Alfred Chester Beatty.[8] The manuscript was in a very poor condition: it had been "restored" in a very crude way, with pieces of parchment and paper.[9] Some of these repairs have been removed recently. In their present state, presumably after some trimming, the folios measure 47×38 cm and are covered with 20 lines of text to the page.[10] The writing surface covers 40,7×32,5 cm. In addition to the "repairs" of the support, both text and illuminations have been sometimes retraced, corrected or "enhanced" by later hands. It should be added that, according to a note in a late hand of the eighteenth century on the paste board of the binding, the copy was said to be ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān's *muṣḥaf*.[11] Judging from the amount of text on a single folio, I estimate the original size of the

6 Ibid.

7 B. Moritz, *Arabic palaeography. A collection of Arabic texts from first century of the Hidjra till the year 1000*, Cairo, 1905, pl. 19–30.

8 E. Whelan, op. cit., p. 131, n. 63.

9 On many folios, a *Tre lune* paper with the name NPOLERO or NPOCERO has been used (see f. 3/ii). It corresponds probably to the eighteenth century restoration (see below). The original parchment, in the shape of small stripes, has been reused as a reinforcement. In at least one case (f. 2/ii), a larger piece of parchment completes the lower part of a damaged folio.

10 The number of folios kept in the Chester Beatty Library is not clear. According to Arberry's catalogue (A.J. Arberry, *The Koran illuminated. A handlist of the Korans in the Chester Beatty Library*, Dublin, 1967, p. 4, no 3a), the manuscript contains 201 folios. When I saw it, two groups of folios were kept separately: seventy-eight folios, numbered continuously from "1" to "78" and corresponding probably to the "better series" seen by Whelan (op. cit., p. 132, n. 70), are bound together. The rest of the folios start with "1" and the last one bears no "201". However, a few folio numbers in this second group are duplicated (f. 93, 101 and 106), but some are also missing. The latter may correspond to folios which were selected for the first group. Anyhow, they are not in the correct order as indicated by Whelan (ibid.). With the confused situation currently prevailing, I shall hereafter call the first group of bound folios Is 1404i and the rest Is 1404ii, although there is of course only one manuscript, but with some folio numbers used twice. In the following text, the folios will be followed by i or ii in order to identify their current position, e.g. f. 27/ii means f. 27 of Is 1404ii.

11 See E. Whelan, op. cit., p. 119. The note also relates the restoration of the volume in 1140/1727.

manuscript to have consisted of about 410 folios. In other words, ca. 78 square meters were needed for the production of this copy.

Most of the folios are now isolated, but a few bifolia have survived, for instance f. 18–19/ii, and, more interestingly, f. 46–51/ii and 56–63/ii (with f. 59/ii and 60/ii missing).[12] Their dimensions indicate clearly that the manuscript was a folio volume. In the two places with textual continuity on a few folios (f. 46–51/ii and 56–63/ii), it is possible to note that the sequence of the parchment sides does not conform to the situation usually found in Islamic manuscripts: the hair sides face hair sides and conversely the flesh sides face flesh sides.[13] Unfortunately, the state of the material does not allow to identify the quires which constituted the manuscript, but they were at least ternions.

As noted by Whelan, the script is of the same thick variety as that found on the Sanaa folios. The *alif* ends in a lower return almost flat on the line. Final or isolated *qāf* is recognisable by its sickle-shaped tail. Final or isolated *mīm* looks like a breve with a triangular tail to the left. The body of final *nūn* is vertical; the upper part of the letter is a curve and the lower is a comparatively short one. The *lām-alif* is almost symmetrical, with its two branches curving towards the other one. The diacritics are thin strokes, not very numerous. The *qāf* is indicated by a stroke over the head of the letter and *fā'* by a stroke below it. The copyist(s) used short line-end fillers, frequently curved. The short vowels are noted with red dots.

The orthography awaits a more thorough study. However, a brief survey shows that the *scriptio plena* is now common for *qāla* and that *shay'* is written without *alif*. The long /ā/, indicated by an *alif*, is integrated into the *rasm*, in some cases more extensively than in the King Fu'ad edition. As for *bi-āyāt*, it has been written with three denticles—for instance on f. 57a/ii, in 3: 4. In the same place, *dhū* is also written in the old orthography, with an *alif*. In contrast with Inv. 20–33.1, *'alā* is written with an *alif maqṣūra*. Although there is no study of the orthography of third/ninth century Qur'anic manuscripts, a quick survey of the material suggests that these orthographic peculiarities had altogether disappeared in that period. Red dots mark the short vowels, but it is not clear whether this is original or a later addition.

The manuscript was not divided into *juz'* as the text is continuous on folios where one of these divisions would have implied either the beginning or the end of a section.[14] A set of seven volumes is excluded for the same reason. It was

12 Whelan only indicates f. 56–57 and 65–66 (ibid.).

13 Also noted by Whelan on the basis of sequences of continuous text (ibid.).

14 Whelan, op. cit., p. 120.

either a single volume—and this seems the most probable—or a two-volume *muṣḥaf* (the middle of the text has not been preserved).

The verses and groups of verse divisions are hardly decorative: the former are marked by three or more diagonal dashes, and the circles singling out the groups of ten verses seem a later addition. The *basmala* is considered as a verse. Illumination is restricted to sura headbands. Thirty-four of them have been preserved.[15] They do not include any indication about the suras—their titles or number of verses have been added later in red in the margin. They have most of the time a rectangular shape, defined by a rope motif in more than half of the cases.[16] In some instances, they adjust to the space available and fill out the end of the last line of the preceding sura when some blank space has been left (e.g. sura 3, f. 56b/ii).[17] In a few places, when the last word was alone on the last line, it has been covered by an illumination (see for example sura 36, f. 59a/i, or 37, f. 63a/i). On both extremities, a vignette of vegetal inspiration, with sinuous twigs bearing leaves, extends into the margin. Some of them are different: their composition is of a simpler nature, probably the work of another illuminator (see for instance sura 7 on f. 26a/i or 15 on f. 36a/i). Very often, those in the outer margin have been lost. Blue, yellow, red and green have been used, but in a few cases there seem to be traces of gold, e.g. on the ornaments of sura 38 (f. 13a/ii) or 77 (f. 194b/ii). As noted previously, they may have been added at a later stage. A dry point ruling for the headbands is visible in some places.

The ornamentation relies heavily on heart-shaped palmettes (or half-palmettes), sometimes expanded into an almost diamond shape in order to get a symmetrical disposition. They are sometimes alone (sura 36, 37, 42, 69, 80, 81), sometimes combined with geometrical shapes like diamonds (sura 4, 41), circles (sura 5, 12, 40) and half circles (sura 35 [fig. 36] and 67). In all cases, natural components are integrated into the composition. They are also present when

15 S. 3–9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 20, 33–38, 40–42, 62, 67–70, 77–83; in two cases, the illumination is covered by a paper restoration (f. 2b/ii and f. 78b/ii; the former could not be identified and the latter is that of s. 8). Moritz reproduced the headbands of sura 3 (f. 56b/ii; B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 19), 4 (f. 51a/ii; B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 20), 12 (f. 123a/ii; B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 21), 15 (f. 36a/i; B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 22), 34 (f. 57b/i; B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 23), 35 (f. 70a/i; B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 24), 67 (f. 191a/ii; B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 25), 70 (f. 193a/ii; B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 26), 77 (f. 194b/ii; B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 27), 79 (f. 75b/i; B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 28), 80 (f. 77a/i; B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 29) and 81 (f. 78a/i; B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 30).

16 Suras 3 (B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 19), 5–7, 9, 15–16 (B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 22), 20, 33, 38, 62, 67 (B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 25), 77–79 (B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 27 and 28) and 82 have either no frame or another kind of frame.

17 B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 19.

geometrical shapes structure the headbands (see for instance sura 9, 13, 34, 79). The rosettes which occupy the centre of the circles in the illumination before sura 9 are related to those found in the decoration of Qaṣr al-Hayr al-Gharbī[18] or those before suras 41 or 54 in the Damascus codex. The inspiration of a few illuminations is clearly different. On the whole breadth of the headband on f. 26a/i, diamonds are traced by two interlacing zigzags, each of them interlacing with four independent but tangent ovoid shapes (surah 7). Sura 20 is preceded by a white interlace within a frame with a rope reserved on a green background, a small square highlighting its corners (f. 46b/i). A more complicated interlace, organised around alternating four and eight-pointed stars, separates sura 15 from the next one (f. 36a/i). A headband with a scroll bearing leaves and grapes has been preserved before the beginning of sura 77 (f. 194b/ii; fig. 37).[19] In most of the compositions, the outline of the palmettes, of the geometrical shapes or of the scroll looks very slender.

Is 1404 puzzled scholars: Moritz dated it to the second-third/eighth-ninth centuries, Josef von Karabacek opted for the third/ninth century in a critical review of Moritz' *Album*,[20] Arthur Arberry avoided taking position on this issue in his catalogue of the Qur'anic manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Library,[21] and David James, in the catalogue of an exhibition, dated it to the fourth/tenth century.[22] Whelan's suggestion has already been mentioned above.

The question of the date should not be separated from that of Sanaa, DaM Inv. 20–33.1. There is an obvious relationship between the script of the latter (which I suggested to call the "Umayyad codex of Sanaa"[23]) and that of the Dublin manuscript. Unfortunately, little remains of this copy, which had originally 520 folios according to Von Bothmer.[24] From his publication, one

18 D. Schlumberger, *Qasr el-Heir el Gharbi*, Contributions de M. Ecochard et N. Saliby, Mise au point par O. Ecochard et A. Schlumberger [Bibliothèque archéologique et historique, CXX], Paris, 1986, pl. 33 (centre left) and 34 (frame).

19 B. Moritz, op. cit., pl. 27. See also s. 82 (f. 78b/i).

20 J. von Karabacek, Arabic palaeography, *WZKM* 20 (1906), p. 136.

21 A.J. Arberry, op. cit., p. 4, no 3a.

22 D. James, *Qur'ans and bindings from the Chester Beatty Library*, London, 1980, p. 23, nº 10.

23 F. Déroche, New evidence about Umayyad book hands, in *Essays in honour of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid* [al-Furqān publication, nº 70], London, 2002, p. 629. Behnam Sadeghi's decision to call the Sanaa palimpsest, DaM Inv. 01–27.1, *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* complicates things as the two names are too close to avoid confusion (see ch. 2 and B. Sadeghi and U. Bergmann, The Codex of a Companion of the Prophet and the Qur'an of the Prophet, *Arabica* 57 [2010], p. 347).

24 H.-C. von Bothmer, op. cit., p. 5. Twenty-five folios have been found so far.

understands that only loose leaves have been preserved, the largest one measuring 44×36,5 cm. However, he contended that the original dimensions of the volume were 51×47 cm.[25] As in the Dublin manuscript, a standard page of text contains 20 lines. Von Bothmer came to the conclusion that the manuscript was made originally of single sheets:[26] in other words an entire sheet of parchment has been used for each folio.[27] He argued that the size of the folios in itself precludes that they could have been the half of a bifolio and that the disposition of the parchment sides, with hair sides facing hair sides and, conversely, flesh sides facing flesh sides, could only be the result of the possibility the copyist(s) had to arrange the sequence according to their own purpose.[28] The usual sequence (flesh facing hair except in the centre of the quires and when facing the contiguous quire) would conversely imply the use of bifolios.

These arguments fail to convince. The dominant parchment quire found in later copies of the Qurʾan (quinions with flesh sides facing hair sides) was one of the possibilities during the first century of Islam, not the only one. Quires prepared according to Gregory's rule, i.e. with the same sequence as that described by Von Bothmer, are already found in the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* and had some diffusion in the earliest times. Dublin, CBL Is 1404 is itself constituted of quires relying on this sequence. On the other hand, the reasons for the author's upper estimate of the size of the folios are not explained. Even if we admit that they were larger than in their current state, their size does not exclude that they would have been the half of a bifolio. Actually, the Dublin manuscript was prepared with bifolios measuring perhaps slightly more than 47×76 cm and I shall analyse below another copy of the Qurʾan with bifolios measuring 50×86 cm, very close to the dimensions of Von Bothmer's reconstruction of the original size of the manuscript (51×94 cm). In other words, as Is 1404, Inv. 20–33.1 is a folio *muṣḥaf*.

If the estimate of 520 folios for the manuscript in its original state is correct, it means that 260 hides of animals were needed in order to produce this Qurʾan. According to an approximation based on a page of text, I would rather suggest a number of ca. 370 folios. In other words, about 90 square meters of parchment were needed; less than the 124 square meters implied by Von Bothmer's hypothesis, but still a herd of 185 animals.

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25 Ibid.

26 See F. Déroche et al., *Islamic codicology, an introduction to the study of manuscripts in Arabic script*, London, 2005, p. 14.

27 Ibid., p. 16.

28 Ibid., n. 139. See the description of the dominant parchment quire in F. Déroche et al., op. cit., pp. 74–76.

The isolated *alif* ends with a lower return toward the right in the shape of an open hook, more marked than in Is 1404. The shaft is upright and terminates in a bevel. The shape of medial *ʿayn/ghayn*, with its right antenna vertical and the left one slanting to the left, does not differ from that seen previously. As in the majority of the manuscripts of the Umayyad period,[29] the lower horizontal stroke of final *kāf* extends to the left, although in an apparently more subdued way than in the Fustat codex, for instance. Final *mīm* looks like a semibreve with a tapering triangular tail to the left, much thinner than in the previous manuscript. The inverted L-shaped final *nūn* exhibits a fat shaft with its upper part slightly bent to the left; the short perpendicular lower return is slightly thinner and longer than in Is 1404. The two branches of the *lām-alif* arise from an asymmetric triangular basis and curve slightly towards the vertical axis of the letter. When situated at the beginning of a word or within it, the *hāʾ* is triangular, with its two "eyes" looking like a chevron. The scribe uses sometimes line-end fillers, usually short ones.

The diacritical marks are rather numerous; *fāʾ* is recognisable by the stroke above the letter, *qāf* being conversely identified by a stroke below it. Red dots indicate the short vowels, according to the system attributed to Abū ʾl-Aswad al-Duʾalī. The question of the date of their introduction has been discussed in the previous chapter: although there is no conclusive evidence in support of their use by the end of the first/seventh or beginning of the second/eighth century, the multiplication of *muṣḥaf*s with red dots indicating the short vowels points to the fact that their diffusion had started by then.

The analysis of the orthography which I can offer here will remain tentative, as it relies on the few pictures of the manuscript which have been published so far. From what I could gather, the *scriptio plena* seems to have made advances similar to those found in Is 1404 when compared with the previously examined copies. *ʿAdhāb* and *ʿibādī* are both written with an *alif*, that is to say in conformity with the *scriptio plena*. The old orthography of *āyāt*, when introduced by *bi-*, is still present, with its three denticles. A new feature is the transformation of *ʿalā*: in place of the *alif maqṣūra*, it is written with an *alif mamdūda*. If we compare f. 69 of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* with a folio of the Sanaa manuscript, it becomes clear that the *fāʿil* forms are now written with an *alif* after the first consonant. Some of the plurals remain nevertheless in *scriptio defectiva*, as *aʿj(ā)z*, next to others in *scriptio plena*.

29 F. Déroche, Un critère de datation des écritures coraniques anciennes: le *kāf* final ou isolé, *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 11 (1999), pp. 87–94 and pl. 15–16 [*In memoriam M. Meinecke*].

The verses are marked by thin diagonal strokes; the groups of five and ten verses have been highlighted at a later date. The *basmala* is indicated as a verse.

The outstanding initial double page with illumination is certainly the best-known feature of the manuscript—but I should also add that it is to my knowledge one of the first copies of the Qurʾan, if not the first one, of which both the beginning with sura *al-Fātiḥa* (sura 1) and the end with sura *al-Nās* (sura 114) have been preserved. For the history of the text in the context of John Wansbrough's hypothesis, the manuscript is an important witness at the beginning of the second/eighth century. In its present state, it opens with a large eight-pointed star on the first recto.[30] Was it so from the beginning or did a first folio disappear which had, facing the illumination of today's f. 1 a, another eight-pointed star? It is impossible to decide. On the outside of the star, trees surge from the corners located between the points of the star, their trunks passing successively over and under the frames of the star. They grow from a central circle with interlace decoration.

The first—and certainly the most famous—preserved opening is the next one (f. 1b and 2a) with its representation of two buildings which have been interpreted as two mosques.[31] On f. 1b, a building with a row of arcades is depicted. In its lower part, two doors which can be accessed by a flight of stairs are still visible. Next to the central stairs stands a vase. Only half of the "inner" part of the building is displayed, but this is enough to understand that there is a central nave, with arches which are higher and larger than the side arcades—two of the latter are equivalent to one central arch. There are lamps hanging in the arcades. In the upper part of the central nave, one sees a ramp. On top of the enigmatic building, trees are growing.[32] The frame, a band of floral interlace, is in a somewhat different spirit from the rest of the very factual representation—with the detail of a staircase in the damaged upper part of the vertical frame. Facing this full-page picture, another building has been depicted in the same realistic manner, but with a completely different organisation (f. 2a). The arcades with lamps hanging from

30 H.-C. von Bothmer, op. cit., pp. 12–13, fig. 9; already in H.-C. von Bothmer, Frühislamische Koran-Illuminationen: Meisterwerke aus dem Handschriftenfund der Großen Moschee in Sanaa/Yemen, *Kunst und Antiquitäten* (1986/1), fig. 1. Compare with D. Schlumberger, op. cit., pl. 73.

31 H.-C. von Bothmer, op. cit. (1987), pp. 5–8, pl. I–II and figs. 1, 2, 5 and 7.

32 Compare with M. Bernabo et al., *Il Tetravangelo di Rabbula: Firenze, Biblioteca medicea laurenziana Plut. 1.56. L'illustrazione del Nuovo Testamento nella Siria del VI secolo*, Rome, 2008, pl. VI–X, XVI, XVIII–XXIV.

them surround a courtyard. A larger arch is located in the upper part, between the trees which, as in the former instance, are depicted "on top" of the building.

On f. 2b, the beginning of the text (s. 1 and the first verses of s. 2) is written within a double frame, the first one in a series of increasingly lighter frames on the following openings (i.e. what can be seen when the manuscript is open).[33] The last one is constituted by a band decorated with palmettes and circles and marked at its corners by a square with a motif in the shape of an X. As a consequence, the number of lines within the frame becomes more important. After this first sequence, the text seems to have been transcribed normally, although there is no evidence to show us what the central part of the manuscript looked like. At the end of the volume, starting with sura 96, the text appears again within frames, those of the last three openings being especially broad. A fragment with sura 114 has been preserved: the text is written within a frame decorated with tendrils and leaves. From what has been preserved from the end of this luxurious copy, it appears that it was partly constructed on a symmetry in the presentation of the first and last openings of the manuscript.

The sura headbands are an important component of the illumination of the manuscript. They originally did not contain any indication of title or number of verses—this information has been added later, in gold, over the original illuminations.[34] They do not always have a strictly rectangular shape but sometimes fit the space available on the last line of the preceding sura. In other words, they fill out the end of the last line of the preceding sura when it is not totally occupied by the text. When this happens, the headband may be partly reduced on its right side: it then takes the shape of a thinner band from which various vegetal elements grow, or that of a stylised vegetal twig.[35] As in Is 1404, a vignette is usually found at both extremities of the headband, but sometimes there is only one on the left side.[36] This seems to happen often when the left part of the headband is a twig. It should be noted that the vignettes only encroach slightly on the margins. As a rule, the extremities of the headband proper are always located within the written surface and not on the vertical line which defines the justification. These illuminations rely on a variety of ornamental sources: vegetal, braided, geometrical … A similar variety can also be observed in the

33 H.-C. von Bothmer, op. cit., p. 13 and fig. 10.

34 Ibid., p. 5 and 13.

35 Ibid., p. 13 and fig. 23.

36 Ibid., p. 13.

shape of the vignettes—e.g. half palmettes, pair of wings. An arrow surrounded by a scroll adorns the space left blank at the end of sura 55, according to Von Bothmer.[37]

The date of the copy has been a subject of discussion. In the exhibition catalogue *Maṣāḥif Ṣanʿāʾ*, it was referred to as "the Umayyad muṣḥaf" and dated to the beginning of the second/eighth century.[38] Von Bothmer suggested that the copy was completed by the end of al-Walīd's reign, between 710 and 715.[39] A C14 dating of the parchment of this manuscript was performed and the calibrated results of the measurements concluded that it had been produced between 657 and 690.[40] However, Von Bothmer stuck to his date. Both he and Jenkins agreed in considering that the manuscript was produced in Syria.[41] Against this Umayyad attribution, Whelan wrote that she "hope[d] to demonstrate [that] there are parallels suggesting a date later than the Umayyad period", although she never published the article which was supposed to challenge Von Bothmer's conclusions.[42] We only know of her views in relation to what she said when discussing the Dublin manuscript, CBL Is 1404.

The parallels which can be established between Inv. 20–33.1 and Is 1404 point to their contemporaneity. Their dimensions, in their present state, are very close (44 × 36,5 against 47 × 38 cm). A codicological examination of the manuscript showed striking similarities between the two copies: both are folio manuscripts, with parchment quires relying on a sequence of the hair and flesh sides in accordance with Gregory's rule. The script of both Inv. 20–33.1 and Is 1404 is considerably thicker than that of the Umayyad codex of Fustat, for instance. It shares with it a tendency to accentuate the width of the letters, but relies for its execution on a tool with a larger tip which was to some extent adapted to the folio copies of the Qur'an so that the script would not only be fully adapted to a larger page, but would also allow the production of balanced three-dimensional volumes. The thickness of the stroke means that a technical evolution had taken place. It was not only a matter of cutting a thicker nib;

37 Ibid. Unfortunately, the author did not reproduce this detail.

38 *Maṣāḥif Ṣanʿāʾ*, Kuwait, 1985, p. 45.

39 H.-C. von Bothmer, op. cit. (1987), p. 16.

40 Hans-Caspar von Bothmer, Karl-H. Ohlig and Gerd-R. Puin, Neue Wege der Koranforschung, *Magazin Forschung, Universität des Saarlandes* 1 (1999), pp. 33–46. A. George mentions an unpublished dating of the ink which suggested a date between 700 and 730 (*The rise of Islamic calligraphy*, London, 2010, p. 79).

41 H.-C. von Bothmer, op. cit. (1987), p. 16; M. Jenkins, op. cit., p. 23.

42 E. Whelan, op. cit., p. 125.

it probably involved a change of tool or of material as well as a change in the movements and position of the copyist. This evolution is all the more striking in that it seems somewhat sudden and no comparable tool seems to have been known in other manuscript traditions of this area. The decision to write 20 lines to the page is certainly more than a mere coincidence. In both cases, the *scriptio plena* is now prevalent, but some early features are still present, for example the "three-denticle" orthography of *bi-āyāt*. However, the copyists do not share the same opinion about *ʿalā*: Is 1404 keeps to the "old" orthography (which is actually still valid today) with the *alif maqṣūra*, and Inv. 20–33.1 uses a "reformed" orthography, with an *alif mamdūda*.

Although a comparison of their illuminations is necessarily restricted to the sura headings, it suggests that the artists relied on a shared repertoire. The palmettes, so ubiquitous in Is 1404 (fig. 35 and 36), are prominent in the headband preceding sura 85 in Inv. 20–33.1.[43] In the latter, the association of circles and diamonds before suras 75 and 91[44] recalls the headband before sura 62 (f. 188a/ii) or possibly that of 9 (f. 33b/i) in Is 1404. The scroll with grapes and leaves of sura 80 can be compared with the ornament following sura 67 in Inv. 20–33.1,[45] and the white interlace in the headband of sura 20 (f. 46b/i) is inspired by the same model as the two components of the frame for sura 114 in the Sanaa codex.

Parallels with earlier or contemporary manuscript traditions and works of art have been offered.[46] At the most general level, the influence of earlier large-size copies of the Bible probably played a role in the evolution, which resulted in an increased size for copies of the Qur'an.[47] In Inv. 20–33.1, the illumination on f. 1a has been paralleled to the famous dedicatory picture at the beginning of Vienna's Dioscorides, a manuscript of the sixth century, with the portrait of the patron of that copy, Julia Anicina. She is depicted within an eight-pointed star which is found in the same position as the figure in Inv. 20–33.1. Architecture was part of the repertory used in religious Christian manuscripts. The first and most common instances are the canon tables which appear traditionally as lists framed by columns and crowned by arcs. In the case of the Rabbula Gospels, a copy completed in 586 in Northern Syria, paintings

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43 H.-C. von Bothmer, op. cit. (1987), fig. 15.

44 Ibid., fig. 14 and 17.

45 Ibid., fig. 20.

46 H.-C. von Bothmer (ibid., p. 14 and 16) repeatedly underscored the links with the Late Antiquity.

47 Th.S. Pattie, The creation of the great codices, in J.L. Sharpe III and K. Van Kampen eds., *The Bible as book, The manuscript tradition*, London, 1998, pp. 61–72.

also use an architectural component as a setting for the representation of the figures, either isolated or in groups.[48] In the Late Antique painting tradition, the architecture provides a particular solemnity to the scene.[49] It may also be seen as an ideal image of the religious building, a visual allusion which could have seemed especially meaningful to the patrons of the manuscript of Sanaa.[50] The diffusion of this iconography had, probably before the seventh century, reached regions as remote as Ethiopia, as shown by the Abba Gärima Gospels.[51] In Umayyad times, the mosaics of the Great mosque in Damascus indicate that this iconography was still in use in an Islamic context and both the Fustat and Damascus codices confirm its presence in the repertoire of Qur'anic manuscript illumination. The date of the fragment Sanaa, DaM Inv. 20–33.1 can be established on the basis of these parallels, as well as on the study of the techniques used for its production and of its orthography. The C14 results are indicative of a chronological position excluding any attribution to a considerably later period.

Both the Sanaa copy and the Dublin manuscript CBL Is 1404 were produced during the first decades of the eighth century, under Umayyad rule and probably in some official context. The cost of these copies has risen dramatically when compared with former *muṣḥaf*s like the Fustat codex. The reflection on the appearance of the sacred book had been applied to both the general outer appearance (the *muṣḥaf* must be a large book) and to the presentation of the text (the *muṣḥaf* must be a beautiful book). A genuine culture of the book had developed—at least in some milieux.

Both manuscripts were far from being isolated instances of large-size Qur'anic copies and more evidence about the production of folio *muṣḥaf*s is available. Although they do not provide information about more common manuscripts, they illustrate an aspect of Qur'anic manuscript production during the last decades of Umayyad rule.

Before turning to three other instances related to Is 1404 and Inv. 20–33.1, a manuscript palaeographically closely related to both copies should be men-

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48 See C. Ceccheli, G. Furlani and M. Salmi, *The Rabbula Gospels*, Olton, 1959, pl. 1a, 2a, 9b and 14a; M. Bernabo et al., op. cit., pp. 84–86, pl. I–III and XXVII.

49 See for instance in Umayyad times, D. Schlumberger, op. cit., pl. 34, upper level and 68, d and e.

50 A. George, op. cit., pp. 85–86.

51 J. Mercier, La peinture éthiopienne à l'époque axoumite et au XVIII^{e} siècle, *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 2000, pp. 36–45 et fig. 1–2. See in n. 1 the references to the first publications about these paintings by J. Leroy.

tioned here.[52] Its script is very similar and its appearance indicates that it is a large volume (fig. 38). However, the number of lines to the page (18 lines) is different and it apparently contains no sura illumination. There is no trace of short vowel marks on the picture published.

Returning to the group of 20-lines-to-the-page copies, another item among the fragments from Sanaa can be added to the list (fig. 39). It has been exhibited in Kuwait in 1985[53] and more recently in Amsterdam.[54] Although it was never properly published, I could quickly examine some of the folios in Sanaa and recently complemented the information I had gathered with additional data.[55] Some twelve parchment folios are kept in the Sanaa collection under the call number Inv. 01–29.2.[56] The largest folio in its current state is 40,5×38,5 cm. There are 20 or 21 lines to the page and the height of the written surface

52 I only know the manuscript, containing 332 folios with paper replacements, through the pictures published by B. Moritz (op. cit., pl. 17–18); according to A. Grohmann, the call number of the manuscript in Dar al-Kutub is Maṣāḥif 387 (The problem of dating early Qur'āns, *Der Islam* 33 [1958], p. 216, n. 17). A few leaves probably from the same copy have been offered for sale in Paris a few years ago (Boisgirard, expert A.M. Kevorkian, Hôtel Drouot, 28 and 29 April 1997, lot no 38). The date of the waqf has been subject to debate: Moritz read 168/784–785, but J. von Karabacek opted for 268/881–882 (op. cit., p. 136), followed by D.S. Rice (*The unique Ibn al-Bawwāb in the Chester Beatty Library*, Dublin, 1955, p. 2, n. 4) while the author of the description in the Cairo library catalogue preferred 368/978–979 (*Fihrist al-kutub al-ʿarabiyya al-mawjūda bi-l-kitābkhāna al-khidīwiyya*, Cairo, vol. 1, 1310/1893, p. 2, no 17852; also E. Whelan, op. cit., p. 133, n. 85). As pointed out by Rice, the *waqfiyyah* is referring to "*al-jāmiʿ al-ʿatīq*" of Fustat, which excludes Moritz' reading since the mosque could only be defined al "old" after the completion of the mosque of Ibn Ṭūlūn in 265/879.

53 *Maṣāḥif Ṣanʿāʾ*, op. cit., p. 48, nº 35.

54 *Earthly beauty, heavenly art. Art of Islam*, M.B. Piotrovsky and J. Vrieze eds., Amsterdam, 2000, p. 195 and figs. on pp. 214–215. Also in H.-C. von Bothmer, op. cit. (1986/1), p. 27 and fig. 3.

55 This fragment and a second one which will be discussed below were analysed by H.-C. von Bothmer in a paper read during the *Les origines du Coran, le Coran des origins* conference in Paris (March 2011).

56 The fragment was exhibited in Kuwait under the call number 20–29.1 (*Maṣāḥif Ṣanʿāʾ*, p. 48, no 35). In the call numbers devised for this collection, the first number indicates the number of lines (and "00" a varying number of lines to the page) and the second one corresponds to the largest width of the writing surface of the manuscript. H.-C. von Bothmer discovered that some folios had 21 lines of script to the page and changed accordingly the call number to Inv. 01–29.2 (communication during the conference '*Les origines du Coran, le Coran des origines*', Paris, 3–4 March 2011).

varies slightly between 30,8 and 32 cm, its width being ca. 29 cm. The verses are separated by clusters of strokes. The groups of five verses are indicated by a circle with the letter *hāʾ* in reserve on a red ground, those of ten by a combination of a circle with a four-pointed star; a letter with its *abjad* value is written in the centre of this ornament, thus specifying the number of verses. One of the peculiarities of the verse division of the fragment is found in sura 16. The canonical verse 16: 91 is divided into two parts after *kafīlan*. From a typological point of view, the situation recalls strongly the "short verses" of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* which seem to have been providing a rhyme to a textual element which was not in consonance with the adjoining ones.[57]

The transcription which was probably entrusted to two copyists[58] was executed in a script which strongly recalls that of the two previous *muṣḥaf*s. However, its seems somewhat more "relaxed" than in the two previous examples. The shaft of the *alif* tends to be slightly rounded and the final *nūn* ends with a shorter lower return. The *mīm* is circular and the lower part of its body is visible below the base line. The *lām-alif* has a somewhat simpler X shape. The diacritical marks, in the shape of thin diagonal strokes, are rather numerous; the *fāʾ* can be recognised by a stroke above its head, *qāf* being indicated by a stroke below the letter. The short vowels are not marked on the few folios which have been preserved.

With little material at hand, it is difficult to assess the state of the orthography of this manuscript. It apparently verges towards the *scriptio plena*, with /ā/ frequently indicated. *Shayʾ* appears with its "modern" orthography (17: 12), but *bi-āyātinā* (11: 96) has kept the "three denticles" of the older tradition.

The most striking feature of these folios is the decorated frame which surrounds the text (ca. 36 × 31,8 cm on the outside). It always consists of coloured bands on which runs a torsade, reserved on the ground, with loops of varying length. In one case, short oblique segments replace the torsade. The corners of the frame are marked out by a square in a colour contrasting with that of the longer segments—not unlike those of the last frame of the initial sequence in Inv. 20–33.1, with a smaller square inserted in it—or of the headband of sura 20 in Is 1404 (f. 46b/i).

Our information about the illumination is restricted to the two sura headbands which have been preserved, that is to say those between sura 9 and 10 on the one hand and sura 14 and 15 on the other. The compositions are purely decorative and there is no indication of the name or number of verses of the

57 See ch. 1.

58 H.-C. von Bothmer's communication (see above).

sura. The first example shows an undulated twig with red pomegranates in the loops and yellow lanceolate leaves set in the triangles between the twig itself and the sides of the frame. In the space left blank at the end of the last line of sura 9, the illuminator has painted a very stylised green twig. The composition is not unlike that found on Inv. 20–33.1 on the bottom of the page with the end of sura 67. The other sura headband also draws its inspiration from the vegetal world. As in the preceding manuscripts, it occupies as much as possible of the space left between the two suras. On the left side, in a red rectangle, a twig with convoluted loops bears stylised fruits and leaves. On the right, the rectangle is connected to the frame by a line on which fruits and leaves are placed in alternating sequence. The repertory is very close to some of the material in Inv. 20–33.1, but it has been executed with less skill. Von Bothmer suggests a Yemeni provenance for this copy.[59]

Another Qur'anic manuscript from Sanaa, DaM Inv. 20–31.1, should be mentioned here. It is a copy in vertical format, with 20 lines to the page. In terms of its size, it is closer to the Umayyad codex of Sanaa.[60] In this case again, the decorative repertory is close to that of the two manuscripts, Sanaa, DaM 20–33.1 and 01–29.2. Only a few folios were found with the rest of the Sanaa trove, but Von Bothmer was able to trace about 300 folios of the manuscript, in the library of the Great mosque. Instances of end of sura fillers in the shape of arrows are said to be present in this manuscript: I shall turn to this point below.

Recently, folios of a Qur'anic manuscript with 20 lines to the page set in a frame have surfaced on the market (fig. 40–43). A leaf is now kept in Copenhagen,[61] another one is in an American private collection[62] and several in Doha.[63] The rest of the manuscript is kept in Kairouan (R 38) and the evidence is still in the process of publication.[64] Nevertheless, some details are already

59 H.-C. von Bothmer's communication (see above).

60 H.-C. von Bothmer's communication (see above). As noted before, the second number (in this case 31) in the call number corresponds to the largest width of the writing surface of the manuscript. Here, it is therefore 31 cm.

61 David collection, Inv. 26/2003. See S. Blair et J. Bloom, *Cosmophilia: Islamic art from the David Collection*, Chesnut Hill, MA, 2007, p. 98, nº 33.

62 See D. Roxburgh, *Writing the word of God. Calligraphy and the Qur'ân*, Houston, 2007, p. 16, fig. 5.

63 Doha, Museum of Islamic art, MS 213; Doha, Museum of Modern Art, nº 224.

64 Kairouan, Musée des arts islamiques, R 38. 210 folios are preserved in Kairouan. See M. al-Nayyal, *Al-maktaba al-āthariyya bi-l-Qayrawān. ʿArḍ—Dalīl*, Tunis, 1963, fig. 3 (the

available. It has been written on parchment folios in vertical format measuring almost 50×43 cm (writing surface: 35,8×32,5 cm). On the basis of the material published, we can estimate that roughly 80 square meters of parchment were needed for the production of this impressive *muṣḥaf*. As many of the places where the text could have been divided into volumes—like the *juz'* or the seventh—are present on the folios of the manuscript, we can conclude that it was probably a single volume copy. The manuscript is also important because it is, with Inv. 20–33.1, one of the first cases where both the first and last folios of a copy of the Qur'an are preserved.

The script is distinct from that of Inv. 20–33.1 or of the manuscripts which can be related to the latter. At first sight, it is more slender than the script of the previous manuscripts. The *alif* is upright, with the lower return in the shape of a hook more accentuated than in the previous manuscripts. The two antennas of medial *'ayn* are in a similar position. Final *kāf* usually has its two horizontal strokes of the same length. Final *mīm* is more rounded than in Inv. 20–33.1, but without encroaching onto the lower part of the baseline. Final *nūn* is close to the shape this letter exhibits in C I, for instance.[65] Three components are clearly recognisable: above the line, the head which is slanting to the left, then the main part of the *nūn*, also slanting to the left but moderately, then the lower return, short and horizontal. The initial or medial *hā'* is also more rounded on its left side. The *lām-alif* hesitates between an X shape and an asymmetrical disposition, with the right branch almost vertical, the other one curving slightly towards the vertical axis of the letter. The diacritical marks in the shape of thin diagonal strokes are rather numerous. The *fā'* can be recognised by a stroke above its head, *qāf* being indicated by a stroke below the letter. The short vowels are indicated by red dashes, a very specific system which nevertheless follows

numbers are indicated on p. 19); *Tunisie*, p. 195, nº 118, ill. pp. 214–215 (nº 118 a à d); *Al-Muṣḥaf al-sharīf attributed to 'Uthmān bin 'Affān* (*The copy at the Topkapı Palace Museum*), T. Altıkulaç ed., Istanbul, 1428/2007, pl. 5 et 6; M. Rammah, *Makhṭūṭāt nafīsa min al-turāth al-qayrawānī. Manuscrits précieux du patrimoine de Kairouan. Precious manuscripts from the Kairouan heritage*, Tunis, 2009, pl. s.n.; *Lumières de Kairouan*, Tunis, 2009, p. 36; M. Rammah, *Trésors de Kairouan. Treasures of Kairouan. Kunuz al-Qayrawān*, [Tunis], 2009, pl. s.n., p. 9; *Tunisie: du christianisme à l'islam. IVe–XIVe siècle*, Ch. Landes and H. Ben Hassen eds., Lattes, 2001, p. 195 and pl. on pp. 214–215.

65 F. Déroche, *Les manuscrits du Coran: Aux origines de la calligraphie coranique* [Bibliothèque Nationale, Catalogue des manuscrits arabes, 2e partie, Manuscrits musulmans, I/1], Paris, 1983, pp. 39–40 and pl. XII–XIV; id., *The Abbasid tradition, Qur'ans of the 8th to the 10th centuries* [The Nasser D. Khalili collection of Islamic art, I], London, 1992, pp. 40–41; A. George, op. cit., p. 152.

the same rules as Abū ʾl-Aswad al-Duʾalī's red dots system; in the manuscript, no *tanwīn* is indicated.

There is hardly any trace of the *scriptio defectiva* in the manuscript. Among the five items, which I have been using in order to define roughly the state of the orthography in the various copies of the Qurʾan which have been examined, *āya* with its "three denticles" version (see for instance at 30: 58, 45: 25 or 62: 5) is apparently a unique remnant of the old orthography. The rest is written fairly coherently according to the *scriptio plena*. However, as a complement to this remark, it should be noted that *dhū* is written with a final *alif* (62: 4, for instance). Conversely, a new feature is consistently present in the manuscript: *ʿalā* is written with an *alif mamdūda*.

The verses are marked by columns of thin diagonal strokes. The *basmala* is indicated as a verse. The groups of five are singled out by a red circle, while those of ten are indicated by a specific ornament combining a yellow circle and a red square with concave sides (fig. 40). In the middle of each side, there is a green dot. The circle has sometimes received a more elaborate decoration, but above all the illuminators paid attention to the ornaments for the hundreds, highlighted by their larger size.

Like Inv. 20–33.1, the copy has been conceived with a symmetry in the illumination between its beginning and its end. Although the ornamentation of the copy is far less ambitious than was the case for the Sanaa codex, it has been carefully planned. From the first folio preserved, probably the left hand half of the first opening (equivalent to f. 1b and 2a), only the upper half has been preserved. The illumination which was set centrally on the opening page has unfortunately been severely damaged. It was beyond doubt circular, with an outer crown made of a series of incomplete tangent red circles, with a green outline on the interior. Towards the outside, these figures serve as a basis for a green three-pointed shape (a leaf?), the branches of which are separated by two petals. Part of a circle of pearls which separated the outer crown from the inner part of the circle is still visible. We can only speculate as to the composition which was found within the circle. Was it an eight-pointed star as in the Sanaa copy, Inv. 20–33.1?

On the verso, the text is written within a frame. The *Fātiḥa* begins directly below the upper segment of the frame, without any headband. Then a headband separates it from the sura *al-Baqara*. We can deduce from this that the headbands were meant as devices marking the end of the suras.

Two folios from the end of the volume have been preserved—although in poor condition. They correspond to the double page opening with the last two suras. Both suras have been transcribed in the middle of the page, in a space reduced on both sides by a vertical band of ornament. Above and

below, an illumination covering the space available completes the frame for the text. The two facing pages are symmetrical in their distribution, but not in their ornamentation: the illumination above sura *al-Nās* (114), a reticulation of octagons, is alone in its kind—the other three relying on hexagonal cells. The last word of sura *al-Nās* is followed by a thin twig, then by a *basmala* as the last line of text. The verso, the last page which has been preserved, is decorated by a square (fig. 43). A white twig bearing green leaves on a red ground runs between two lines of yellow pearls within the oblong rectangles constituting the four sides of its frame. The corners are highlighted by a square containing a quatrefoil. A circular figure is enclosed within the frame, on a background left blank. Four concentric bands decorated with heart-shaped motives, pearls and a rope, separated from each other by a coloured fillet, constitute the circumference. The inner part of the circle is occupied with an eight-pointed star on a green background. The star itself consists of two interlaced squares, in reserve. Each of its points is painted in red and the central octagon is filled by a circle, in the centre, surrounded by eight tangent circles with geometric design.

Illumination is present on all the folios of the manuscript since the text is enclosed by a frame similar to that of Sanaa, DaM Inv. 01–29.2 (fig. 39). As in the Yemeni fragment, its sides are enhanced either by oblique segments or by a rope pattern reserved on the coloured ground. The latter appears in two variants. Each of the four corners of the frames is enhanced by a square which contrasts by its colour with the rest of the frame and contains a smaller square reserved in its centre.

Illuminations are also found between the suras (fig. 40–42). The space between the latter varies from usually one to two full lines that have been left empty by the copyist(s). It also happens that, when most of the last line of a sura is blank, the copyist refrained from leaving a line empty (as is the case for sura 24, but it may also be due to the fact that there was only room for one line of text). When a sura ends on line 20, the space left after the last word received the illumination. As a rule, the space has then been filled in by headbands which are devoid of any information. They occupy the width of the justification, usually linking one inner side of the frame to the other one. When part of the last line of the preceding sura does not contain text, the illuminator usually used it for the headband which may therefore have an irregular shape—as was the case with Inv. 20–33.1. Conversely, it sometimes happened that the right part of the space was not sufficient to allow the illuminator to prolong the same ornament until the margin. In such cases, a twig connects the rectangular headband to the margin; in many instances, it supports a vegetal component—flowers or leaves. Another solution used by the illuminators was to insert either an arrow at the end of the last line of the sura when a space had been left blank, or a twig with leaves.

The repertory of the headbands themselves relies mainly on geometry, less frequently on vegetal inspiration. The repetition of a figure (diamond, circle, quatrefoil …), either juxtaposed and connected to the next one or interlaced with another figure, has been repeatedly used by the illuminators. In a similar way, they juxtaposed square or rectangular compartments filled with some simple composition across the breadth of the headbands. A few examples of braids reserved on the ground have been preserved. The panels found on the last text opening, with suras 113 and 114, rely on a reticulated composition based on hexagonal cells (above and below sura 113, below sura 114). Above sura 114, the intersections of the diagonally oriented red grid are occupied by small yellow squares, thus defining octagonal spaces. The vegetal repertory relies on scrolls bearing leaves, flowers or, less frequently, grapes (see at the beginning of suras 25 [fig. 42] and 42). The twig is often reserved on the ground of the headband. The quality of the illumination is variable and suggests that it has been the work of a team.

In a few cases, arrows have been used as sura-end fillers (fig. 42). They are usually depicted with the point towards the last word of the sura, in a very realistic way. Between sura 29 and 30 (fig. 41), the headband looks like a band set between two arrow-heads, the one on the left being larger than the other one. In addition, the space left at the end of sura 29 is filled with a roughly triangular elongated device, connected to the headband, to which eight arrows are fixed; two more arrows have been drawn vertically above the left arrow-head. The arrows appearing in a Qurʾanic manuscript conjure up an account concerning al-Walīd II (who reigned from 125/743 to 126/744) who is said to have shot arrows at a *muṣḥaf* …[66]

A C14 dating of the parchment is now available and confirms the attribution of the manuscript to the early period. The results give the highest probability (95.6 %) for a date comprised between 648 and 691 AD—a result which is very close to that of the large *muṣḥaf* from Sanaa, Inv. 20–33.1.[67] I nevertheless suggest that the real date is somewhat later. An interesting feature common to the Kairouan manuscript and the Sanaa fragment, Inv. 01–29.2, is the lack of golden ornament. In spite of the impressive size of both copies, it is surprising that the patrons hesitated in having part of the illumination in gold—as is the case of Inv. 20–33.1, and the Damascus and Fustat codices.[68] Indeed, yellow

66 Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *K. al-Aghānī*, Cairo, 1935, vol. 7, p. 49, l. 10–15.

67 KIA40647.

68 Gold seems present in a very few instances on MS Dublin, CBL Is 1404, but it is not clear whether it is original or the result of overpainting.

seems to have been chosen as a substitute of this “colour”. As the investment required for both copies of the Qur’an was without doubt quite substantial, the amount of gold needed for the illumination would not have made a big difference in the final cost. The absence of this component has certainly more to do with a decision of the patron than with the desire to spare money.[69] We know that by the middle of the second/eighth century, Mālik b. Anas condemned the use of gold in a copy of the Qur’an.[70] The manuscripts may either reflect a general reaction against the use of gold, or a choice made by the patron(s) of both manuscripts in accordance with their final destination—e.g. a mosque. I would therefore suggest that both *muṣḥaf*s were produced by the end of the Umayyad rule, in the first half of the second/eighth century.

The features common to both R 38 and Sanaa, DaM Inv. 01–29.2 (framed text, similar inspiration in the illumination, original markers for the groups of verses, number of lines to the page) are puzzling and suggest a close relationship—although the limited amount of material preserved from Inv. 01–29.2 renders any conclusion about the illumination premature. As argued previously, the page setting of the Qur’anic manuscripts followed in many instances from an early date a form which was supported either by the tradition and its sanctity, or by the political power. Within the group of five manuscripts with 20 lines of text to the page, both copies are in keeping with a model. One cannot avoid thinking of the possible existence of a workshop which would have been producing Qur’anic manuscripts on a large scale or at least of some control over the production of officially commissioned copies.

Interestingly enough, the illumination of the Kairouan manuscript also finds parallels in the manuscript Dublin, CBL Is 1404. The headbands found before suras 76, 77 and 79 in R 38 are by their composition close to that preceding sura 9 in Is 1404 (f. 33b/i). This common inspiration appears again in the headbands of suras 6 and 86 in R 38 which recall respectively the sura ornaments found before suras 78 (f. 74b/i) and 20 (f. 46b/i) in Is 1404. Among the scroll compositions of R 38, two of them (before suras 73 and 78) call to mind the slender, almost too thin, twig characteristic of most of Is 1404 illuminations in general and of the headband before sura 77 (f. 194b/ii) in particular. In spite of

69 See the account about ʿUmar II in the *Fihrist* (below, n. 72; the actual reasons are different).

70 See for instance A. Jahdani, Quelques opinions de Mālik (m. 179/796) sur le Coran-codex, [Actes de la conférence internationale sur les manuscrits du Coran (Bologne, 26–28 septembre 2002)] *Mélanges de l’Université Saint-Joseph* 59 (2006), pp. 274–276.

the difference between the scripts of the two copies, their common decorative repertoire, also shared by Sanaa, DaM Inv. 01–29.2 strengthens the attribution to the same period.

Arabic sources hint at such state-sponsored operations. The "edition" of the Qurʾan by ʿUthmān and the story of the official copies sent to the largest cities of the Empire could serve as the founding episode, if we take this account for granted. Al-Ḥajjāj is in his turn said to have been involved in the production of an edition of the text which would have been more legible and to have sent copies to the largest cities of the Umayyad empire when his enterprise was completed.[71] The *Fihrist* provides an account about a calligrapher, Khālid b. Abī al-Hayyāj, who was hired by a certain Saʿd who may be identical with the Saʿd *al-maṣāḥifī* known through another source.[72] The latter was in charge of overseeing scribal activities for al-Walīd. He may have been in charge of commissioning copies of the Qurʾan and providing instructions about their lay out. The investment required for the copies which have been discussed was so high that it certainly required official support to be produced—the more so because from what has survived it seems that the operation was repeated many times. The hypothesis of a Damascene scriptorium producing large official copies which were sent throughout the empire seems far-fetched, but both the sources and the material suggest that presentation manuscripts were complying with officially elaborated guidelines.

The conception of the illumination between the suras deserves a remark: here again, there seems to have been an evolution which I suggest is mainly due to the role assigned to the ornament. The desire to have any vacant space filled in played obviously a significant role in the switch from illuminations contained in an either materially or theoretically defined rectangular space to those headbands which were adapted to the space available. A look at other contemporary manuscripts, devoid of any illumination, shows a few cases where the end of the last line of the sura supports the idea that the need to prevent any addition or modification was felt in a very acute way. This effort is exemplified by both Sanaa, DaM Inv. 20–33.1 and Dublin, CBL Is 1404. Sanaa,

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71 O. Hamdan, *Studien zur Kanonisierung des Korantextes. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrīs Beiträge zur Geschichte des Korans*, Wiesbaden, 2006, pp. 146–148.

72 Ibn al-Nadim, *K. al-Fihrist*, ed. R. Tajaddud, Tehran, 1350/1971, p. 9; English transl. by B. Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadîm, A tenth-century survey of Muslim culture* I, New York/London, 1970, p. 11. Y. Eché (*Les bibliothèques publiques et semi-publiques et semi-publiques en Mésopotamie, en Syrie et en Egypte au Moyen Age*, Damascus, 1967, p. 18) suggested to identify him with an individual mentioned by al-Samʿānī (*K. al-ansāb*, ed. Hyderabad, t. XII, 1400/1981, p. 284).

DaM Inv. 01–29.2 and Kairouan, Musée des arts islamiques, R 38 go a step further: the frame comes as a complement to this search for a "closed" or "protected" text. Although this element could be seen as the ultimate solution in the search for a regularised justification, both copies still use line-end fillers within the frame.

Three large copies of the Qur'an which may be related to the previous examples may be briefly mentioned here. Two leaves or fragments from a *muṣḥaf* have been published as Umayyad, one by Marcus Fraser and Will Kwiatkowski,[73] and the other one by Yasin Dutton.[74] The latter author disclosed with his study the results of a C14 analysis of the parchment which he summed up in the following way: "it is most likely that the parchment was made between AD 609 and AD 694."[75] These dates are actually very similar to those obtained in the analysis of both Sanaa, DaM Inv. 20–33.1 and Kairouan, Musée des arts islamiques, R 38 and support this attribution.

However, in this case again, the C14 data need to be qualified. The authors only knew the manuscript through an isolated folio and pictures of other folios kept in Baghdad. Much more material has however been preserved in Istanbul. The 122 folios of the manuscript Istanbul, TIEM, Env. 51 and 53 I have been able to examine cursorily exhibit characteristics which do not agree completely with a date in the Umayyad period. Their structure, from a codicological point of view, would rather support a date in the early Abbasid period. The volume is a plano copy, which means that each folio is a full sheet of parchment, like the group of 12-lines-to-the-page manuscripts such as Paris, BnF Arabe 324c which I suggest to relate to the production of large *muṣḥaf*s under al-Mahdi's rule, with strong propagandistic motives.[76] For its part, the illumination does not seem to rely on the Umayyad repertoire which has been analysed here.

Another fragment from a large copy (43×34 cm) was kept in the Great mosque in Damascus (fig. 44). On each page, a rope surrounds the text. This frame recalls the manuscripts Sanaa, DaM Inv. 01–29.2 and Kairouan, Musée des arts islamiques, R 38, but in this case the rope stands alone instead of being a component of the frame. Another difference with the other two Qur'anic copies

73 M. Fraser and W. Kwiatkowski, *Ink and gold. Islamic calligraphy*, Berlin-London, 2006, pp. 18–21.

74 Y. Dutton, An Umayyad fragment of the Qur'an and its dating, *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 9–2 (2007), pp. 57–87.

75 Ibid., p. 64.

76 F. Déroche, Of volumes and skins (Part II). The Qur'anic manuscripts of al-Mahdi, in *Iraj Afshar Festschrift* (forthcoming).

is the ornament based on vegetal components which develops from each of the corners of the frame and recalls a similar although simpler ornament in the Rabbula Gospels.[77] The 25 lines of text to the page on this manuscript are more in accordance with the earlier examples, for instance the Fustat codex.

The *alif* has a short crescent shaped lower return and the *mīm*, *nūn* and *hāʾ* are closer to the B group.[78] The two horizontal strokes of the *kāf* are almost equal in length, a letter shape which was already in use at an early date.[79] The orthography is close to the *scriptio plena* as represented by the Cairo edition. *Qāla* and *qālū* are systematically written in this way and *shayʾ* appears in the "modern" orthography, without *alif*. However, the copyist hesitates about the plural *ʿibād*: in sura 37, it is written defectively in verses 122 and 171, for instance, but in *scriptio plena* in verses 111, 160 or 169. In quite a few instances, the long /*ā*/ is not indicated, for instance in *fāʿil* forms. The *basmala* is marked as a verse, the groups of five and ten verses are indicated respectively by a yellow *hāʾ* and by a round ornament with a red *abjad* letter in its centre. At the end of each sura, in red ink, the total of its verses is indicated in *abjad* within a rectangle, followed by its title and number of verses, in words, introduced by *khātimah sura*. A decorated band separates it from the next sura. These headbands are constituted by the repetition of a compartment with simple patterns reserved on red, green and yellow.

The date of the manuscript is problematic. Was it still produced under the Umayyad dynasty or is it an early Abbasid *muṣḥaf*? The same question can be asked about the Qurʾanic manuscript, which was kept in Katta Langar.[80] This

77 See C. Ceccheli, G. Furlani and M. Salmi, op. cit., pl. 3a; M. Bernabo et al., op. cit., 2008, pl. IV–V.

78 F. Déroche, op. cit. (1983), pp. 38–39 and pl. X–XII; id., op. cit. (1992), pp. 35–36 and 38–39; A. George, op. cit., p. 150.

79 See ch. 2.

80 *De Bagdad à Ispahan. Manuscrits islamiques de l'Institut d'études orientales, filiale de Saint-Pétersbourg, Académie des sciences de Russie*, Paris, 1994, pp. 84–85, no 1: E. Rezvan, The Qurʾān and its world: VI. Emergence of the canon: the struggle for uniformity, *Manuscripta Orientalia* 4–2 (June 1998), pp. 23–26 and 28–46; F. Déroche, Note sur les fragments coraniques anciens de Katta Langar (Ouzbékistan), *Patrimoine manuscrit et vie intellectuelle de l'Asie centrale islamique. Cahiers d'Asie centrale* 7 (1999), A. Muminov, F. Richard and M. Szuppe eds., Tachkent-Aix-en-Provence, 1999, pp. 65–73 and pl. VII; E. Rezvan, Yet another "ʿUthmanic Qurʾān" (on the history of manuscript E 20 from the St. Petersburg branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies), *Manuscripta Orientalia* 6–1 (March 2000), pp. 49–68; id., On the dating of an "ʿUthmānic Qurʾān" from Saint Petersburg, *Manuscripta Orientalia* 6–3 (September 2000), pp. 19–22; id., New folios from the

muṣḥaf, of which the largest part is kept in Saint Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Studies, E 20, is written in B I style on large vertical format parchment folios (52 × 32 cm). The sura ornaments are very different from what has been seen before—and may well have been added later. The results of a C14 dating of the parchment are not precise enough, but they suggest a date in the second/eighth century.[81]

To this list of problematic manuscripts of the second/eighth century can be added a copy of the Qurʾan attributed to ʿUthmān and kept in the Topkapı Saray Library.[82] The manuscript formerly H.S. 194,[83] now 44/32,[84] was in Cairo whence Mehmet Ali sent it to Istanbul as a gift to the Ottoman sultan in 1811.[85] The text is almost complete on 408 folios measuring 46 × 41 cm, with most of the time 18 lines to the page. Some folios are probably later replacements. The quires are mostly quinions, with a few quaternions (for instance f. 95–102 or f. 294–301). The parchment sides follow the dominant sequence, that is to say that a quire starts with the hair side as first recto, all the bifolios being arranged in the same position.[86] Sides of the same nature are facing each other only in the middle of the quire or at the juncture between two quires.

The script can be related to group C, like Kairouan, Musée des arts islamiques R 38. The final or isolated *kāf* is usually written with two horizontal strokes of equal length, but the copyist(s) sometimes elongate(s) the lower stroke when he needs to occupy more space, for instance on f. 80a, l. 2 or 98a, l. 12.[87] Final *qāf* is usually quite conspicuous, with a long tail interfering with the line(s) below. The *scriptio plena* of *qāla*, *ʿibād* and *ʿadhāb* is dominant. *Shayʾ* is written without *alif*, but the "three denticles" orthography is still in use in *bi-āyāt*. It should also be noted that *ʿalā* is written with an *alif mamdūda*.

The verses are divided by small circles or crude rosettes. Tayyar Altıkulaç distinguished three types, one of them being clearly of a later date.[88] The groups

"ʿUthmānic Qurʾān" I. (Library for administration of Muslim Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan), *Manuscripta Orientalia* 10–1 (March 2004), pp. 32–41.

81 E. Rezvan, On the dating of an "ʿUthmanic Qurʾān" from Saint Petersburg, *Manuscripta Orientalia* 6–3 (September 2000), pp. 19–22.

82 T. Altıkulaç ed., op. cit.

83 F.E. Karatay, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi arapça yazmalar kataloğu*, vol. 1, *Kurʾan, Kurʾan ilimleri, Tefsirler. No 1–2171*, Istanbul, 1962, p. 1, no 1.

84 T. Altıkulaç ed., op. cit. See also K. Small, *Textual criticism and Qurʾân manuscripts*, Lanham MD, 2011, pp. 16–17 and fig. 3–4.

85 Ibid., p. 73.

86 F. Déroche et al., op. cit., pp. 74–76.

87 In both cases, the other shape is found on the next line (see f. 80a, l. 1 and f. 98a, l. 11).

88 T. Altıkulaç ed., op. cit., Plate 2.

of five and ten are marked by more elaborate circles: here again, two types are most probably original and a third of the same restoration as above.[89] There are specific devices indicating the groups of hundred verses.[90] The *basmala* is marked as a verse.

The suras are separated by headbands containing elements which can be related to an Umayyad iconography. This is, for instance, the case of the scrolls, often schematic (e.g. f. 401 a), most notably of an example where the undulating twig is associated with a vase (f. 109 a).[91] On f. 383 b, an arrow occupies the space left by the last word of sura 71 on l. 18 and recalls those of the manuscript Kairouan, Musée des arts islamiques, R 38. Architecture is quite conspicuous in the manuscript: many headbands contain simple depiction of arcades[92] which are probably inspired by earlier Umayyad illuminations, but their rendition is closer to the sura ornaments of the Abbasid fragment Paris, BnF Arabe 324 c. The last opening with text has been preserved (f. 407b–408a). The last suras are inscribed within a circular shape, recalling the first folio of R 38, but the illumination is barely legible. The *basmala* of suras 111 and 113 is written above the circle, in a separate setting. The date of this *muṣḥaf* remains unclear. It is without any doubt a copy of the second/eighth century which is related to the Umayyad tradition.[93]

Drawing a clear cut division between the Umayyad period and the beginnings of Abbasid rule proves particularly difficult as far as manuscript production is concerned. The tumultuous fall of the Umayyads was perhaps also not the most auspicious time for the production of manuscripts and the decline in revenues for the state (or the necessity to spend them on other expenses) had some effect on such big projects as exemplified by the first five manuscripts. However, script styles and illumination did obviously not change overnight in the wake of the Abbasid revolution and some of the features of the Umayyad *muṣḥaf* lingered on for some time.[94] I would therefore more cautiously speak of an Umayyad tradition—rather than strictly Umayyad manuscripts—when dealing with copies which might be dated to the middle of the second/eighth century, unless some elements clearly invite the contrary.

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89 Ibid.

90 Ibid., Plate 3.

91 See detail on pl. 4.

92 See f. 47a, 253b, 292a, 332b, 367a, 373b, 397a. A detail is reproduced ibid., pl. 4.

93 The *muṣḥaf* attributed to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib kept in the Great Mosque in Sanaa belongs to the same typology.

94 See for instance some details of the illumination of Paris, BnF Arabe 324 c (see F. Déroche, *forthcoming*).

The copies which have been examined should not hide the fact that most of the late Umayyad *muṣḥaf* production was of smaller format and still has to be identified. A few examples on which I commented at the end of the previous chapter may belong to this group. The O I script was probably still in use in some circles or for smaller copies and *muṣḥaf*s in one of the most regularised varieties of *ḥijāzī* style may have been transcribed at that moment. Other fragments to which I shall now turn briefly could also have been produced during the end of the Umayyad period. The copyists were certainly also transcribing the Qurʾan in other styles, notably those with the final *kāf* with two branches of the same length. This may be the case of Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 80, a fragment in the Damascus collection containing 62 folios measuring 25,4 × 28,2 cm, with 21 or 22 lines to the page.[95] The writing surface is rather constant (21,7–22 × 24–25 cm), probably because of a frame ruling in brown ink. Part of what has been preserved (f. 53–62) is a later replacement on paper. The original parchment folios (f. 1–52) are written in B Ib style, without vowel signs and few diacritical marks. The verses are separated by columns of oblique dashes in brown ink (1.1.1) and the groups of ten verses are indicated by a red circle surrounded by dots (1.A.II). Next to very simple sura ornaments, a few (a scroll with flowers and leaves, a palm tree, etc.) recall Umayyad models. The paired foliages and the bulbous termination of the headband separating sura 71 and 72 (fig. 45) are clearly related to an ornament found in the Damascus codex (fig. 21). The binding, decorated with a central six-pointed star inscribed in a circle, could be the earliest specimen of a Qurʾan binding of Type I.[96]

The fragment Tübingen, UB MaVI 165 could be an example of more common copies of this period (fig. 6).[97] The seventy-seven parchment folios were bought in Damascus by the middle of the nineteenth century by the Prussian consul Johann Gottfried Wetzstein. They measure 19,5 × 15,6 cm and are written with 18 to 21 lines to the page (writing surface: 16,3/17,3 × 12,5/13,3 cm). The script can be defined as a variety of B Ia, close to that of Saint Petersburg, IOS E 20. The verses are separated by groups of three dashes. At the end of the suras, groups of six dashes are sometimes repeated in order to fill the end of the

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95 A few more leaves are scattered in the collection.

96 See A.S. Demirkol et al., *1400. Yılında Kur'an-ı kerim*, Istanbul, 2010, pp. 148–151. For Type I binding, see F. Déroche et al., op. cit., pp. 286–289.

97 M. Weisweiler, *Universitätsbibliothek Tübingen. Verzeichnis der arabischen Hanschriften* II, Leipzig, 1930, p. 125, nº 161. R. Paret (Besonderheiten alter Koranhandschriften, in *Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Vorderen Orients, Festschrift für B. Spuler zum siebzigsten Geburtstag*, H.R. Roemer and A. Noth eds., Leiden, 1981, p. 317, 319 and 320) suggested that it is the third quarter of the Qurʾan.

line. Between the suras, ornaments have been drawn in a dark brown ink and are irregularly enhanced by touches of red. With the exception of the frame with a compartment decoration on f. 33a, they develop freely as in some of the illuminations of the Damascus codex. Some of them, for instance on f. 11, may derive from the acanthus sheaths as on f. 6 (sura 19) of the Fustat codex.

Von Bothmer's pioneer work on the manuscript Sanaa, DaM Inv. 20–33.1 has led to the identification of a group of magnificent copies produced under official patronage. They reflect a major change in the techniques involved in their production, as well as a new vision of the Qur'an as a book. Were official "scriptoria" in charge of the preparation of such volumes? The similarities between them point to a control over their appearance, but their idiosyncrasies prevent from considering that they were produced by a well-established team. Some amount of team work was certainly involved, but probably in a more informal way. The ornamental repertoire evolved: some components inherited from the Late Antique tradition are still present, especially in the Qur'anic manuscripts discussed in the first part of this chapter, but geometrical compositions and highly stylized vegetal shapes played an increasing role in the last examples. Are we still dealing with Umayyad manuscripts? On this point, more research is needed in order to ascribe them confidently to this period or to the beginning of Abbasid rule.

Conclusion

The history of the *muṣḥaf* during the Umayyad period is striking by the changes it underwent over a comparatively short period. It involved very visible aspects, like the lay out, the script or the illumination, as well as intellectual "tools"—techniques of textual control and philology … By its size and its complexity, the text of the Qur'an was a challenge for a milieu, which had no comparable experience with the transmission of texts.[1] The comparison between the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* and the Sanaa codex Inv. 20–33.1, with half a century at most separating these two copies, is in itself eloquent in every respect.

The earliest Umayyad *muṣḥaf*s (at least until ca. 75/ca. 695) maintained many features of the Late Antique book tradition, primarily in their physical components like the shape of the codex in vertical format or the use of parchment as support for the script. Among the various possible mise-en-page, the long lines were preferred, a decision which was to have a lasting influence over the Arabic manuscript tradition. The transcription adapted the *scriptio continua* of Late Antiquity to the specificities of the Arabic alphabet. Other characteristics, like the number of lines to the page (more than 20 and less than 30), the elimination of the margins or at least their reduction to the minimum, were specific to the early *muṣḥaf* and supplied it with a distinct visual identity. As far as the text was concerned, the identification of the individual verses was an important issue: from the earliest copies, it is clear that the individuals in charge of the transcription paid much attention to the verse separations.

On the other hand, other points did not matter so much. A definite option in the way of constituting the quires does not seem to have prevailed then. A blank space was considered as an appropriate way to separate the suras. The script in use at that time, the *ḥijāzī* style, was deeply stamped by individual performance, and neither copyists, nor readers were uneasy with variations in its appearance when manuscripts were transcribed by various copyists, like the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*. As shown by the Ahnas papyrus dated 22/643[2] and the inscription of Zuhayr of 24/645,[3] diacritical marks were already used

1 G. Schoeler, *The genesis of literature in Islam. From the aural to the read*, Revised edition, Edinburgh, 2009, pp. 16–27.

2 A. Grohmann, *From the world of Arabic papyri*, Cairo, 1952, p. 62.

3 ʿA. b. I. Ghabbān, The inscription of Zuhayr, the oldest Islamic inscription (24 AH/AD 644–645), the rise of the Arabic script and the nature of the early Islamic state. Translation and concluding remarks by Robert Hoyland, *Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy* 19 (2008), pp. 219–222.

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to distinguish homographs, but the copyists of the manuscripts seldom and irregularly dotted the letters. Short vowels were not noted and orthoepic signs were completely lacking. Book hands and documentary scripts were not clearly distinguished.

Although the *muṣḥaf* of the origins does not concern us—from a purely chronological point of view, it certainly had a direct influence over the period in consideration.[4] The possibility that some of the fragments date back to the decade that elapsed between the murder of ʿUthmān (35/656)—or even before—and the beginning of Umayyad rule can in no way be excluded, but we do not have strong arguments—material or textual—to attribute precisely to this period any of the manuscripts or fragments which are currently known to us. Various copies attributed to ʿUthmān were demonstrated to be from a later date and the C14 dates for the parchment of *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I*—the *scriptio inferior* of the palimpsest—which has been described as a pre-ʿUthmanic copy are not conclusive since the comparative material suggests in this case a date in the second half of the first/seventh century. However, we can reconstruct the appearance of the first manuscripts of the Qurʾan on the basis of the earliest evidence known to us, like the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, which was probably transcribed within the first two decades of Umayyad rule.

The evidence they provide, when confronted with the accounts transmitted by the Islamic tradition about the writing down of the Qurʾan, confirms that these reports contain without doubt a historical core and, notably in the case of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, that a text compatible with the canonical version was transmitted. The place they give to the written word cannot be neglected in the context of a complex relationship between orality and literacy.[5] Leaving aside the information about the writing down of the revelations during Muhammad's lifetime, to have the text in written form was considered as the only way to save it—under Abū Bakr, then to preserve it from any deviations—under ʿUthmān. On the other hand, the copies which had been produced outside of the circle officially entrusted with the establishment of

4 We leave deliberately aside the notes with Qurʾanic texts circulating during Muhammad's lifetime which would correspond to the *hypomnêmata* in G. Schoeler's typology (op. cit., p. 21) or to what K. Small defined as "a blending between the Predecessor text-forms and Autographic text-forms" (*Textual criticism and Qurʾânic manuscripts*, Lanham MD, 2011, p. 163). Anyhow, the conditions under which the revelations were received were not compatible with the codex shape.

5 I use here the word 'literacy' as Y. Dutton in a recent paper (Orality, literacy and the 'Seven *aḥruf*' *ḥadīth*, *Journal of Islamic studies* 23–1 [2012]).

the canon were seen as a threat by ʿUthmān and al-Ḥajjāj who ordered their destruction. The caliph did not hesitate to include in this measure a revered relic, the *ṣuḥūf* of Ḥafṣa. The written text was an important issue for the rulers, but also for those who did not agree with them and were also keeping their codices. Ibn Masʿūd's dissent had echoes in the fourth/tenth century, with copies derived from his codex still circulating. Similar information is transmitted by Ibn Qutayba who reports in the third/ninth century that Qurʾanic copies diverging from the canonical text were still found.[6] The *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I*, based on a textual tradition which was not altogether eliminated in Umayyad times, confirms the reports of the tradition.[7] Although their historicity can be questioned at some points, their concern with literacy underlines its importance for the first generations of Muslims. All these facts point to a plural written transmission during the first century of Islam—one which survived well into the fourth/tenth century.

On the other hand, the absence of the specific variants of the *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* among those which have been preserved by the tradition indicates that part of the information has been discarded or not taken into account, although the date I suggest for this copy implies that this specific witness was still in use by the end of the first/seventh or beginning of the second/eighth century. As it is alone in its textual tradition, it is unfortunately impossible to evaluate the way in which it was transmitted in various copies and to compare the results with what can be observed in the case of the canonical *rasm* thanks to the information provided by the tradition and by the manuscripts belonging to this current of transmission. As far as the latter is concerned, the data at hand suggest that its text was still slightly fluid—although 'within very strict limits'.[8] The manuscripts in *ḥijāzī* style which follow basically the ʿUthmanic version provide evidence of this situation, with limited variations of the *rasm*. The script used for the recording is defective, particularly in the sense that the diacritics are not put to use in order to clarify possible ambiguities of the *rasm*, although they are known to the copyists of the majority of these copies. There

6 V. Comerro, *Les traditions sur la constitution du* muṣḥaf *de ʿUthmān*, Beirut, 2012 [Beiruter Texte und Studien 134], p. 53. During the next century, a similar situation is attested by al-Nadīm (see *K. al-Fihrist*, ed. R. Tajaddud, Tehran, 1971, p. 29). I leave aside the related but different question of Ibn Masʿūd's *qirāʾa* which was still used in Kūfa during the 2nd/8th century (see E. Beck, Die b. Masʿūdvarianten bei al-Farrāʾ, *Orientalia* NS 28 [1959], pp. 186–190).

7 B. Sadeghi and M. Goudarzi, Sanʿaʾ 1 and the origins of the Qurʾān, *Der Islam* 87 [2010], p. 20.

8 F. Donner, "The Qurʾān in recent scholarship: Challenges and desiderata," in G.S. Reynolds ed., *The Qurʾān in its historical context*, London-New York, 2008, p. 42.

is more. If we turn to the reports stating that the diacritics were introduced in the course of al-Ḥajjāj's '*Maṣāḥif* project' and that *tāʾ* and *yāʾ* were selected in order to distinguish between the second and third person of some verbal forms, we have to admit that manuscript evidence says otherwise. The manuscripts belonging to the earliest phase were not complying with the goal set by caliph ʿUthmān as reported in al-Zuhrī's account, partly because the script had not yet reached an adequate level of accuracy, partly also because the copyists were not fully using its possibilities. The latter is more consonant with an age in which the use of diacritical marks was increasing and the notation of the short vowels was gaining ground. We have to wonder whether the personal experience of this key transmitter did not distort his report. He was after all a contemporary of the Fustat codex or Sanaa, Inv. 20–33.1 and certainly well acquainted with the copies circulating in Damascus at the beginning of the second/eighth century.

The slightly fluid state of the ʿUthmanic text during the first decades of Umayyad rule raises doubts about the use of collation at an early date. The traditional accounts about the collection of the Qurʾanic text actually maintain, perhaps in order to stress the authenticity of the canon,[9] that a sophisticated and painstaking process of textual edition, implying notably a collation (*ʿarḍ*) with the *ṣaḥifa* of Ḥafṣa bt. ʿUmar, was applied. However, they also attribute to the next step of ʿUthmān's undertaking, namely the transcription of the *maṣāḥif al-amṣār*, the origin of the canonical variants, which entails that collation was not further applied.

This incoherency prompts a reconsideration of the canonical variants of the *rasm*. The historical value of their list itself is questionable, as shown by the presence of a couple (*qāla/qul* in places like 23: 112 and 114) which could not be graphically perceptible before the end of the first/seventh century. Technically, it is doubtful whether such a variant or that found in 23: 87 and 89 could have escaped the attention of the collators when the text was read aloud.[10] One would rather think that collation came into use at about the same moment when the graphic accuracy had made headway and the transmission techniques started developing. The small variants found in the ʿUthmanic *rasm* were detected and this procedure of control over the transmission was incorporated anachronistically into the account about the collection of the Qurʾan itself in order to stress the fidelity of the text to its source and its stability. Similarly, the etiological account of the origins of the canonical variants provided a justification for the actual state of the text.

9 V. Comerro, op. cit., p. 59.

10 The same remark can be applied to the variant *Allāh/li-Llāh* in 23: 85, 87 and 89.

As a whole, the manuscripts of the first period (at least until ca. 75/ca. 695) suggest that the relationship with the text was quite open and the ability to modify the physical appearance of the *muṣḥaf* found its equivalent in the changes brought to the orthography—to a more limited extent. The whole period, as I hope to have demonstrated, witnessed a gradual transition from the original *scriptio defectiva* to an orthography closer to that of the modern 'standard text'. This was achieved by addition, but also by suppression of some of the elements of the *rasm*. In the case of the 'Uthmanic version, these modifications did not alter the fundamental agreement with the canon (although they resulted sometimes in a *rasm* variant) and aimed at producing a text which was in the end closer to what the caliph is said to have intended. Interestingly enough, this effort, best exemplified by the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus*, seems to have relied in good part on individual choice. In this respect, there seems to have been a broad agreement with the way in which the script or the readings (accessible to us through the division into verses) were approached. In other words, there was no strict control over the circulation of the text during the first decades of Umayyad rule. The *Codex Ṣanʿāʾ I* confirms that non-canonical copies were still produced around 700 AD and later sources suggest that this situation lasted well into the fourth/tenth century.

A change occurred probably during 'Abd al-Malik's reign (from 65/685 to 86/705), and the accounts about al-Ḥajjāj's '*Maṣāḥif* project' (between 84/703 and 85/704) reflect the concern and the involvement of the Umayyads with the text of the Qurʾan, obviously with two goals: one was to achieve a greater uniformity, the second one being to support the prestige of the dynasty. At that time, the changes affected both the text itself and the visual identity of the *muṣḥaf*. As far as the latter is concerned, the most obvious modifications were the introduction of the margins, leading to an increasingly larger codex (although the size of the copy remained relatively constant at that time), the use of a calamus with a broader nib and the substitution of a script incorporating largely personal features with a solemn calligraphy which was repeated by various copyists, probably as the result of a specific training. This script, O I, heralded the end of the 'personal' *muṣḥaf* in *ḥijāzī* style in favour of a book sharing common features and conveying in a symbolic way the unity of the community and the sameness of its scripture. In this context, the concept of Qurʾanic scripts emerged gradually and led to an increasing distance between these scripts and the common use. The relationship between the O I style and the official inscriptions on 'Abd al-Malik's milestones as well as the account about the commissions entrusted to Khālid b. Abī al-Hayyāj are indicative of the direct involvement of the ruling elite in this process.

The first instances of illumination are probably to be attributed to that moment:[11] the idea that the *muṣḥaf* should be a beautiful book is probably related, as I have tried to show, to both the contacts with the other manuscript traditions, either through some acquaintance with their books or through the hire of Christian or Jewish craftsmen by Muslim patrons, and to the efforts of the Umayyads to rival Byzantium. On the other hand, the almost systematic replacement in the Fustat codex of the *scriptio defectiva* of *qāla* by the *scriptio plena* suggests that the points which might prove ambiguous began to receive systematic attention—and we know from the statements concerning al-Ḥajjāj's venture that this was precisely one of his goals.

It should be noted that this change was far from receiving the agreement of the whole community and a few decades later Mālik b. Anas warned against any modification of the old orthography. On a purely formal aspect, some patrons and copyists seem to have been likewise conservative: many copies of quarto size suggest that *muṣḥaf*s for public use remained largely similar in their outer appearance to those of the earlier period. The dimensions of the Fustat codex are very close to those of the *Codex Parisino-petropolitanus* and folio volumes like Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 71 are exceptional among the material which has been preserved. On the other hand, the authoritative quality of these 'new' copies influenced copyists who were keeping the earlier tradition. This tendency is certainly reflected by the incorporation of features like the margins or line end fillers into manuscripts in *ḥijāzī* style. Globally, the control over the text itself increased during this stage, with the progress of the *scriptio plena* or the introduction of the red dots as short vowel signs. If the account about the correction by a *qāri*ʾ of a scribal mistake in ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān's *muṣḥaf* is true, it might indicate that some form of collation started to take place at that moment as a result of an official concern with the accuracy of the Qurʾanic manuscripts.[12]

A third change, of a quite distinct nature, occurred probably during al-Walīd's reign (between 86/705 and 96/715). It was actually restricted to the most lavish copies produced under official patronage. Folio *muṣḥaf*s may have been known before, as seem to indicate fragments like Istanbul, TIEM ŞE 71 or Sanaa, DaM Inv. 00–30.1.[13] However, their script was not fully adapted to the size of

11 Some of the crude headbands found in copies in *ḥijāzī* style may of course pre-date the more sophisticated illuminations of the Fustat codex.

12 Ibn Duqmāq, *Description de l'Egypte*, ed. K. Vollers, part 1, Cairo, 1893, pp. 72–74; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-l-iʿtibār bi-dhikr al-khiṭāṭ wa-l-āthār*, ed. A. Fu'ad Sayyid, vol. IV-1, London, 2001, pp. 30–31.

13 They may of course have been produced slightly later and imitate the new *muṣḥaf*s.

the folios and resulted either in thin volumes which were not suitable for the propagandistic and apologetic aims of the patrons or in copies with a too thin script on large pages. Some calligraphers probably devised a new tool which allowed to write less text on a page and to produce more impressive volumes. Whereas Inv. 00–30.1 only had ca. 150 folios, the manuscripts Kairouan, Musée des arts islamiques R 38 or Sanaa, DaM Inv. 20–33.1 reached ca. 370 folios. To the previous attempts at producing a beautiful book was added a new concern, at least among the Umayyad elite: these large copies show that the three dimensional aspect of the codex was taken into account and turned to good use in an apologetic perspective. In spite of their shared characteristics which suggest that they answered the same requirements, they were not produced in an official workshop.

The changes meant of course an increase in cost. The ever larger amounts of parchment required for the most impressive copies had their price—and copyists and illuminators also needed to be paid. We do not have direct evidence on this subject, but we may perhaps understand the story of caliph ʿUmar II who turned down a copy in gold letters prepared for him by Khālid b. Abī al-Hayyāj because of its price, as an echo of the increasingly larger sums of money spent on copies of the Qurʾan. It should also be noted that the use of gold is apparently frowned upon already in the final decades of Umayyad rule, as conspicuously indicated by the illuminations of R 38. This decision had of course wider ideological implications and reflects probably the wish to break away from Late Antique models—somehow echoing the reproach supposedly levelled against al-Walīd I about the mosque in Medina.

Very little is known about private ownership of Qurʾanic manuscripts during this period. A few accounts providing scant information, some of it about the price of the copies,[14] suggest that individuals started from an early date to own *muṣḥaf*s. The material preserved says little about this question. The early octavo copies may in some cases have been in private hands, but the amount of parchment used for others is similar to that of quarto Qurʾanic manuscripts, which prevents from reaching a general conclusion on this basis.

We know slightly more about the public copies and can detect in this case a shift in perception from a plain record for safekeeping to a component of a ritual. Public reading from official copies started during the period, al-Ḥajjāj

14 The prices found in some accounts are either related to wages paid for the copy of the Qurʾan or to indemnifications for the destruction of older copies. They could refer to privately owned *muṣḥaf*s. It is not clear whether the copy prepared by Khālid b. Abī al-Hayyāj for ʿUmar II was a 'private' copy. In the end, I only found three cases of private ownership in the sources (see above, p. 44 and n. 26, and p. 54, n. 67).

being possibly responsible for its introduction.[15] An adaptation of Jewish or Christian use probably played a role. There is however another obvious function of such a ritual: it was evidently meant to promote an officially sponsored text, but it also recalled to the audience that the copy had been presented by the ruler or by his circle. The reaction of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān, when al-Ḥajjāj's copy reached Fustat, is significant in this respect. He had his own *muṣḥaf* made, but it remained for a long time a private copy, although it was integrated into public worship and transferred on Fridays from ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz' palace to the mosque.[16] Later, after Asmāʾ, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz' granddaughter, died, wages were paid to a reader for public performances.[17]

By the middle of the second/eighth century, a long way separated the austere looking codex which first embodied the *kitāb* announced in the revelation and expected by the early community, from the luxury copies produced under official patronage. Leaving the age of books deeply stamped by the individuals who produced them, the Umayyad book had entered a phase in which the possibility to reproduce a style of script again and again became increasingly important. The techniques required for the production of calligraphic copies and the concept of Qurʾanic script developed simultaneously. This does not mean that all the *muṣḥaf*s produced at that time looked similar. Some milieux were sticking to the tradition or exploring other ways. Part of the material which has been preserved reveals the impressive pace of the transformations, but other manuscripts more in keeping with the early copies were still produced—even if they integrated some of the innovations like the margins or the end of line fillers. The apparent concurrence of various shapes (oblong and vertical formats, for instance), scripts (B Ia, C Ia and O Ib) or illumination repertoires possibly from ca. 75/ca. 695 until the end of the Umayyad period may point to different milieux or regions. Unfortunately, the material does not provide hints in this respect. The striking advances of the script in terms of accuracy—the invention of short vowel marks or the diffusion of the *scriptio plena* for instance—parallel the evolution in the material lay out and witness to the impressive efforts around the *muṣḥaf* that marked the Umayyad period.

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15 Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ al-wafā bi-akhbār dār al-Muṣṭafā*, ed. M. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Beirut, 1984, vol. 2, p. 668.

16 Ibn Duqmāq, op. cit., 1893, pp. 72–74; al-Maqrīzī, op. cit., pp. 30–31.

17 Ibid.

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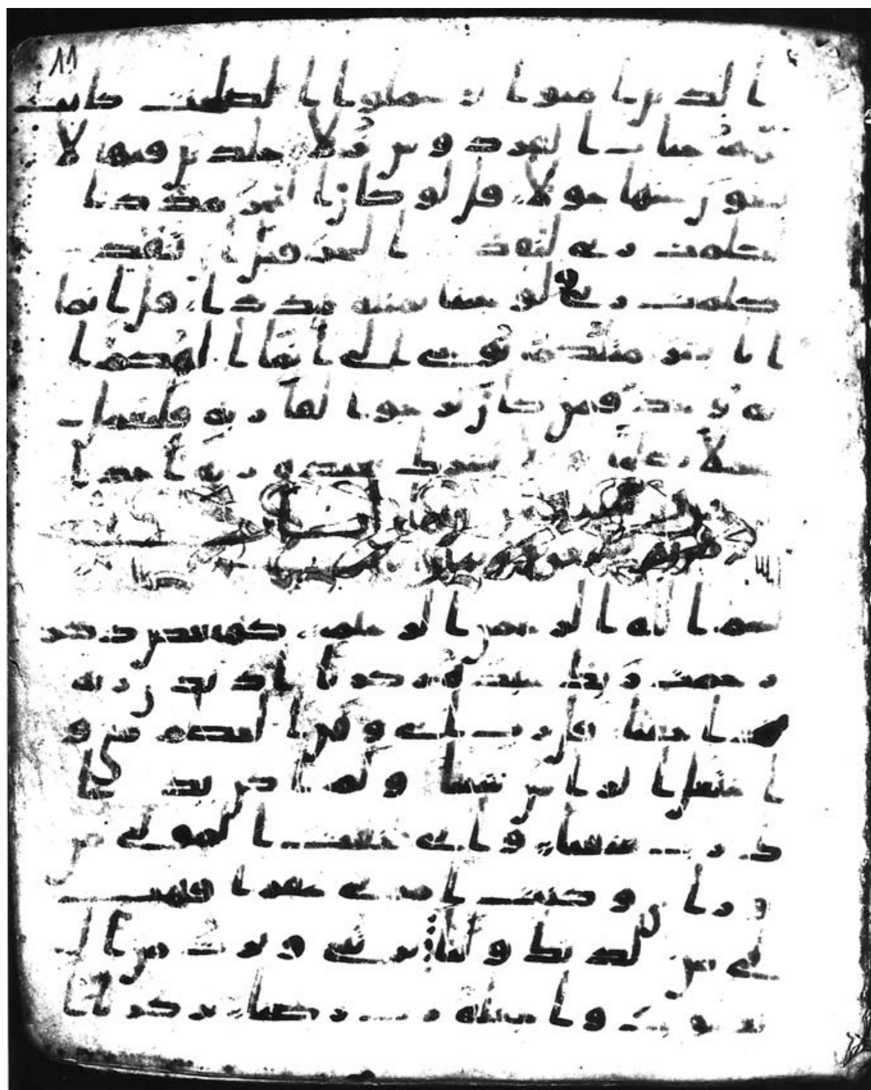


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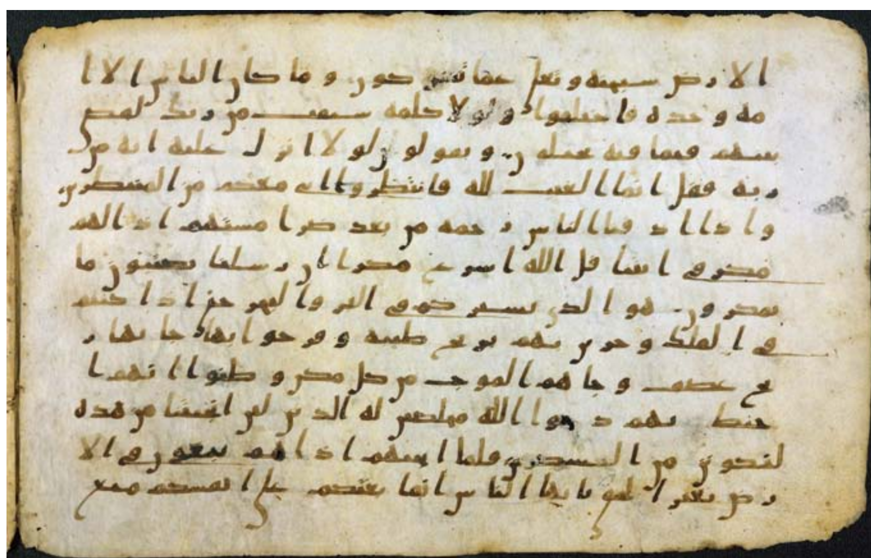


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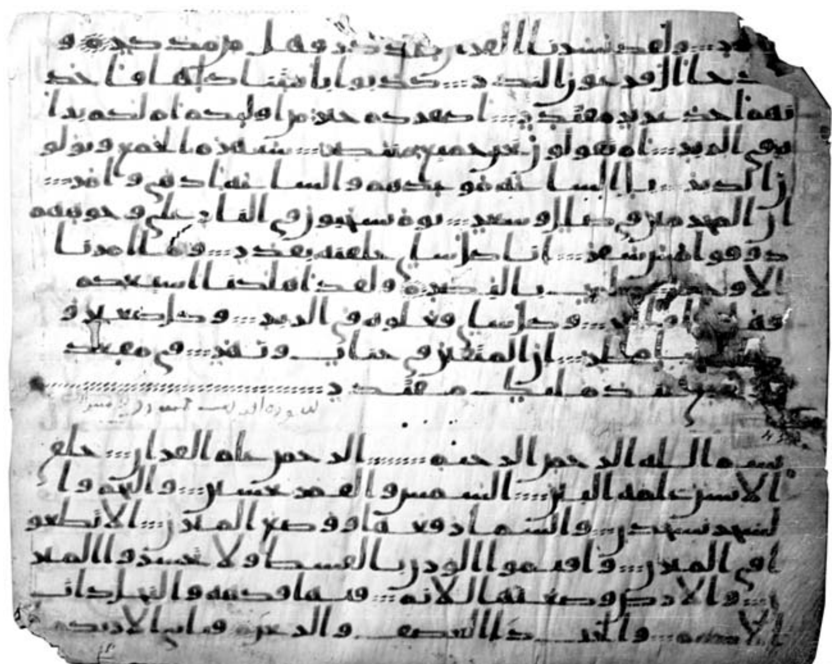


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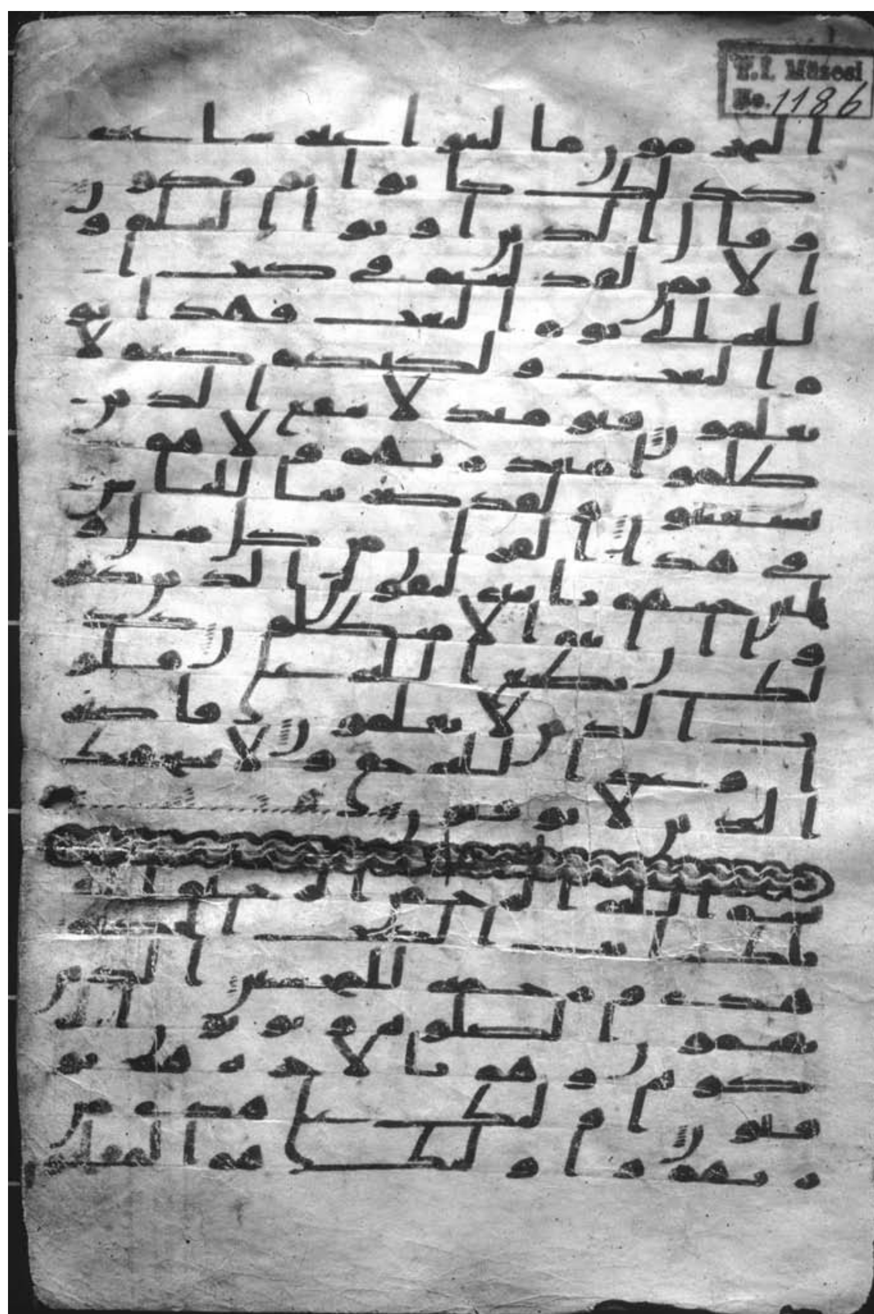


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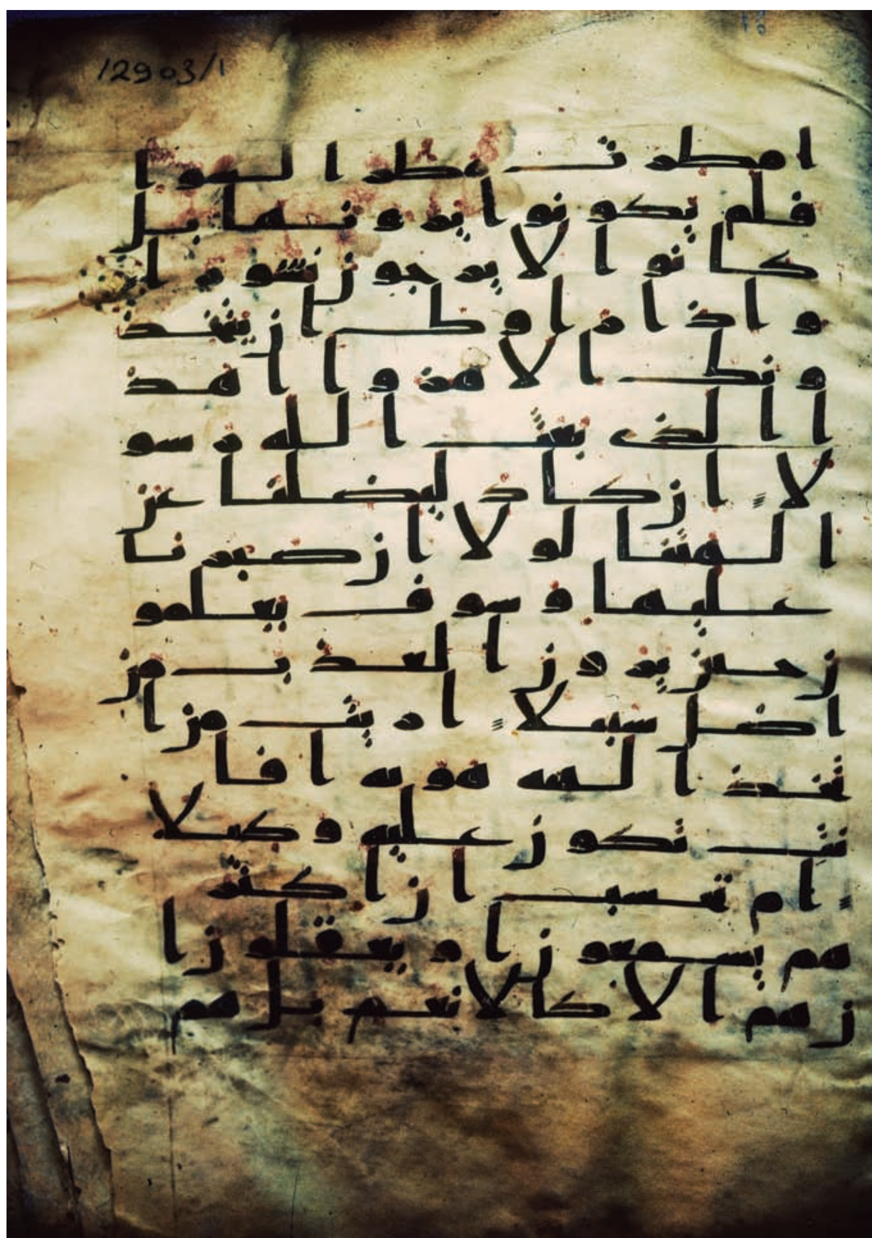


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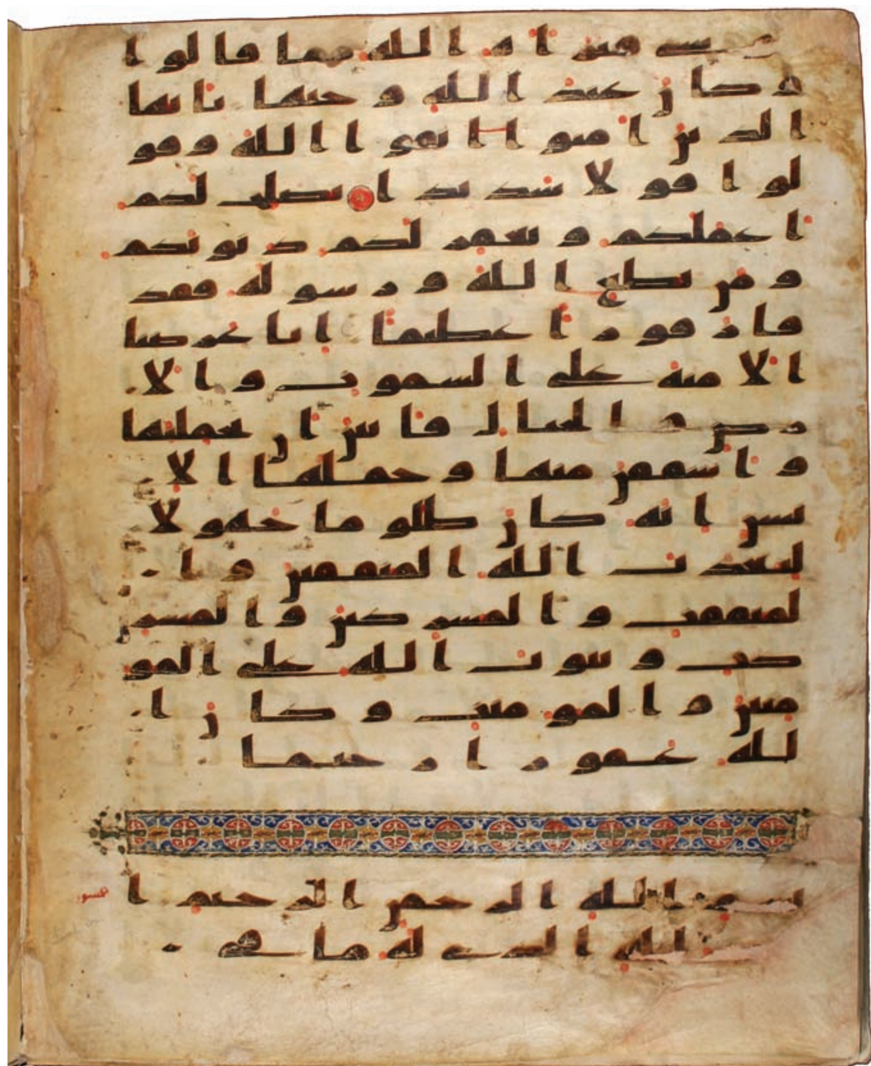


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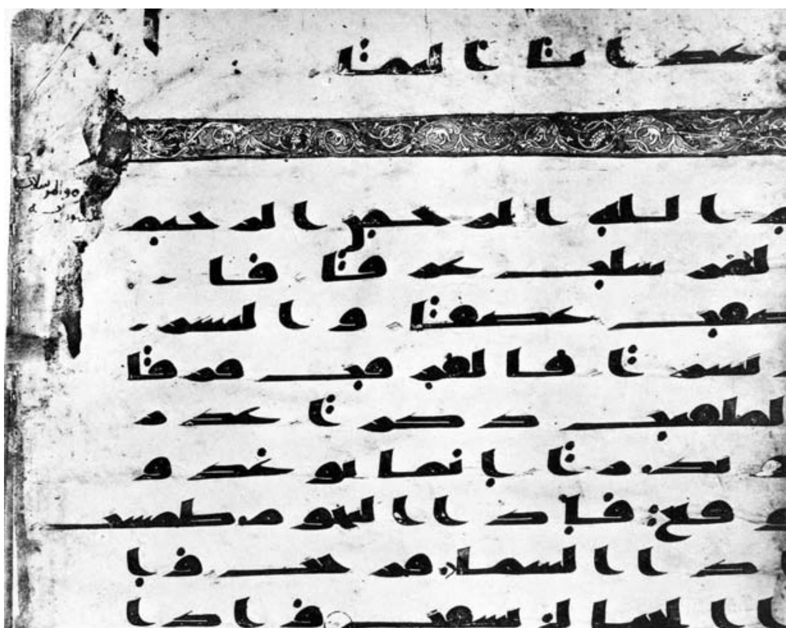


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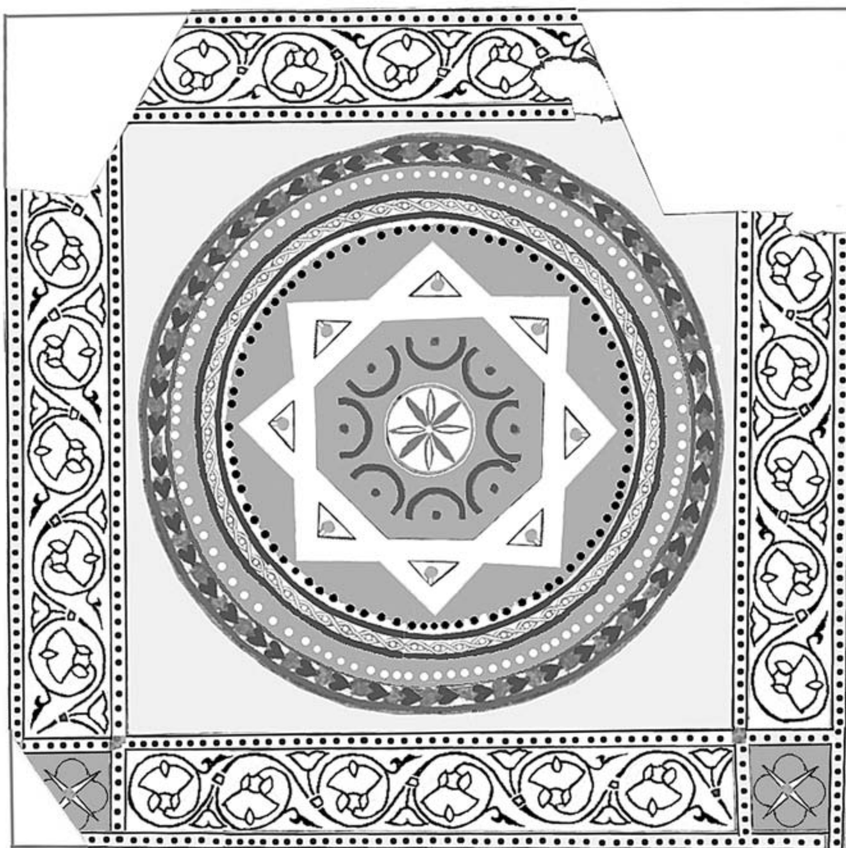


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